

ELECTRONIC GAMING = MON

**YOSHI'S
STORY**

Nintendo
Rehatches
A Classic

Also Featured:

Rebus • Snowboard Kids • Point Blank
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Diablo • Mystical Ninja • Winter Heat
Virtual Chess • Dead or Alive • Tekken 3
Shining Force III • SaGa Frontier • NHL 98

March, 1998
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104



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"But Susan, I have Klonoa."

"Hey baby, I WANT Klonoa!"





Everybody wants Klonoa. He's the fantasy creature from Phantomile. He's wacky. He flaps his over-sized ears to fly. He kills his enemies by inflating their bodies and launching them from any available mountain top. He's also the star in Namco's new action-adventure game in a 3-D trippy landscape. Once you've got Klonoa, you won't want to get rid of it.



KLONOA *by* **namco**[®]
Adapted from Phantomile

b l o w u p o r s h u t u p

Editorial

By Joe Funk • joe_funk@zd.com

Readers ask us all the time about including a retro-gaming section in *EGM*. Not the 8-Bit and 16-Bit stuff (heck, a lot of those games still rank as some of the best of all time—see our Top 100 Games in issue #100), but the ancient relics from before the mid-'80s market crash. I'm talking arcade games, plus the very first home systems like Atari 2600, Magnavox, Vectrex, Intellivision, ColecoVision, etc.

It's a question that stirs debate in just about every editor here, but the answer always comes back the same.

Usually, we struggle to find space to cover all the current products being released in our bustling industry. It's not that we're philosophically against covering retro games, it's just that practicality in the form of a finite amount of editorial space dictates our coverage.

We're certainly not against covering gaming's heritage (witness our timeline in *EGM* #101 and the second part of our History of Arcades in this issue). If it wasn't for games like Pong and Adventure and Defender and Pac Man, we wouldn't be playing the games we are today. No doubt, replaying those old games and reliving those experiences is priceless. But how many of you out there have found that after playing those old games a few times, they just don't have enough depth to hold your interest for very long? You find yourself saying, "I spent all that time way back when playing this simple game? Geez, I don't remember my life being that boring."

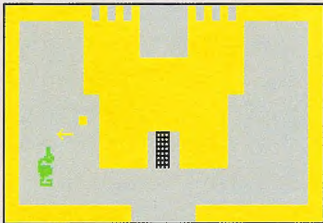
While hearing the sounds and seeing the sites of a Defender or Centipede stirs the adolescent in all of us and conjures memories of those halcyon days after school at the dimly lit neighborhood arcade, the truth is those warm and fuzzy feelings bend our memories. It's like having the chance to go back and rekindle an old flame—more often than not, we'll find we put the other person (or thing) on a pedestal and make him/her/it out to be more than he/she/it really was. It's human nature.

Still, the opportunity to relive a part of our past is priceless. It's a core part of why we all play games in the first place. It makes us feel like kids again, and it's an escape to another time and place. We salute Namco, Midway and anyone else who releases classic games, for they are an indelible part of our industry's heritage, and will always hold a special place in the pantheon of video gaming.

Nonetheless, don't expect a retro-gaming section to show up in the pages of *EGM* any time soon. It comes down to a simple formula: not enough space. What would you rather have? A four-page preview on Zelda 64 or a three-page preview with a page on games that have been out 20 years? A story on the future of Sega or a focus on 2600 sports games? Technology fuels our industry, and what's next will always be sexier than what was.

While that might be bad news for the retro-buffs among us, the good news is you will be able to find a gradual increase of retro-gaming coverage on our spanking new Web site, videogames.com. Consider this a manifestation of two of *EGM*'s important traits: We listen to our readers, and we respect the history of our industry.

Looking ahead, you can bet that people playing today's generation of games will wax nostalgic about GoldenEye and Colony Wars the way we do now about Adventure, Smurfs and Intellivision Football and Hockey. Time always marches on, and hey, if nothing else, future EICs of *EGM* can re-use this article by simply replacing the underlined words with the hottest titles of their day.



The Atari 2600 hit, Adventure, dredges up good memories, but it won't excite today's gamers.

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How about a \$5,000 dino? No, we're serious this time.



Nintendo's long-awaited follow-up to Yoshi's Island is finally in our grasp. How does the "2 1/2-D" super-sequel stack up? Head to page 78 to get the full scoop on Yoshi's Story.

A high-angle, low-key photograph of a DJ working at a multimedia station in a GameWorks arcade. The DJ, wearing a grey polo shirt and a black baseball cap, is focused on a large, illuminated touchscreen monitor. The station is equipped with various controls, including buttons and sliders. In the background, the vibrant, colorful lights of the arcade are visible, with other game machines and screens glowing in the distance. The overall atmosphere is one of modern, high-tech entertainment.

ARCADES GROW UP

A DJ mans the mission-control-like multimedia station of GameWorks in Seattle. We give an on-location report of this mega game room, as well as a look at other so-called location-based entertainment centers. Are they really the future of arcades?

[illegible]

ACTIVISION

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IT'S TO SURVIVE.

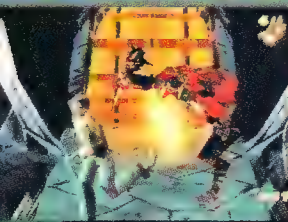
When you're busy leaping
treacherous chasms and
swinging across deadly pits,
you don't have time to
contemplate life's mysteries.
After all, being a legendary
jungle adventurer suddenly
thrust into a mystical universe
takes a toll on the psyche.
Besides, you've already learned
more than the meaning of life...
You've learned what it means to
be one step from death.

PITFALL

— 3D —

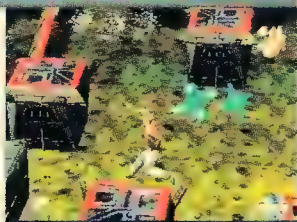
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HOW TO START THE MOTHER OF ALL WARS

{or icky deception, cruelty and betrayal are your friends}



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TRAINING AN ARMY

{or how to ensure the biggest, baddest, meanest SOB's are on your side}





In Final Fantasy Tactics™ you are Ramza, a young squad leader and an ally of Princess Ovelia. It's up to you to lead an elite fighting squad of your own choosing into battle. You must train them to be powerful Black Mages who can cast magic spells, Summoners who can awaken terrible beasts, Wizards,



Ninjas, Bards, Archers, Thieves and more. There are nineteen fighting classes and four hundred abilities to master. If you go into battle ill-prepared, may the enemy make the blood run cold from your heart. 

EFFECTIVE BATTLE STRATEGIES

{or further discussions from the annals of shoot first, ask questions later}

 As the ancient history of warfare reveals, you will survive if your battle strategy is strong, and perish if it is not. You will lead the charge through impressive lands trying to gain the best strategic positions in forests, castle ramparts, swamps and valleys. You can buy and sell equipment, hire new soldiers and plan glorious battle strategies. May you conquer the enemy or may you die trying. 



SQUARESOFT

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS™

egm letters

Compiled by: Dan "Shoe" Hsu

Letter of the Month

Hope For The Future

I have noticed lately there have been a few gripes about lame endings and low replay value in video games. I think I know why things are the way they are. You see, the whole idea of game "endings" is still a fresh concept.

I am an "old school" gamer and have been playing video games since the late '70s. All of the now-classic games that I played didn't have endings. They just looped over and began again.. some, maybe with a faster twist than before. So the who-e point back then was to beat the highest score on the roster or your own personal high.

Nowadays the emphasis is placed on beating a game A.S.A.P. I think this is one of the reasons why video games have become so easy. Just the other day, I played through and finished a game I got for Christmas before I even got a chance to take the wrapping out to the garbage! I don't get me wrong. I think Fighting Force is a very beautifully rendered game with lots of action, but it was "too easy" and too short. I played through the stages with ease.

But you see, this is what I think the majority of the consumers want - a fun and easy game that isn't too frustrating. The trick is finding that happy medium, where the game isn't too hard or too easy. I think this is where the programmers are having trouble, and they end up with a disposable product that has no replay value.

You have to look at the whole problem this way: Most of the programmers are "old-school" gamers, like myself, who played games that never had an ending. They, like me, are used to plain, never-give-up, fight 'em until hell freezes, then fight 'em on ice type games that never ended but 'n turn rewarded you with a harder level for every one completed. And if you did reach the last...eve.., it repeated at a much faster, harder rate. The next day you could then brag to your friends about how many times you flipped the score to "o" and how few quarters you used to do it.

So you see, my guess is that the whole “ending” and “replay value” thing is still a bit new, and I think that as time progresses, through trial and error, programmers will eventually get the endings and replay value to everyone’s liking. Just hang in there. I hope you are just as excited as I am about what possibilities the future holds.

CIX@concentric.net



Congratulations.
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Eclipse Stick (SAT)
or a SharkPad Pro
64* (N64).

[illegible]

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Related Holiday Wishes

What's the best gift to give to me?
 How 'bout Resident Evil 2 on the Sony P?
 Who do I want knockin' at my door?
 The UPS man with Duke 64.
 What would look good sittin' under my tree?
 LucasArts' Rebellion for my PC.
 What's that other thing I'm wishin' for?
 An early release of MK4.
 What's something cool I'd like to see?
 A Director's Cut worth buyin'...j.m... (tempo change)...
 Play Street Fighter 2 with Dan Hsu,
 Kick his "BLEEP" and when I'm through,
 I won't botter w/tn stretch and flex,
 When next I take down Sushi-X.
 Have an RPG party w/ht Kraig Ricciardi,
 Over at the awesome pad of Ed Semrad,
 The bowl of fruit pickards from Kelly Rickards,
 And when it's all over, take a nap like Crispin Boyer,
 I think I've said too much... Happy Holidays 'Yall!
 Chris Snattuck - barryleesober@uno.com

After John Ricciardi read this poem, he asked, "Did Kraig and I get married? At least I got to keep the name..."

Sushi-X's Dream Game

I figured that since I'm trying to get into the video game business as an artist, I thought it would be nice to send you renderings for your dream games [Area 52, issue #100]. I'm starting with Street Fighter: The Summoning, Sushi's dream game. I'm working on all six games, one at a time. Yes, I'm working on Firefighter: Fighter too.

P.S. Dear Sushi, expect a gift in the mail soon. Hint: You have one on your back, but this one is only about 2 inches long. Hope you like it.



Thanks for the picture, although we're not exactly sure what you're referring to in your P.S. We did overhear Sushi-X saying, "Wow, two inches! That's over twice as long as mine! But what does he mean 'on my back'?"

Is The Truth Out There?

I would really like you guys to come clean about your tricks section. I say it is a near impossibility to find a cheat code, yet every month, we see "somebody" sends one in. I think you guys (especially the Trickman) are working in conjunction with some invisible government agency and several large gaming companies intending to mislead the American people in the biggest cover up since Roswell. Is the Trickman real? Or is he a computer-generated hologram with a bad haircut?

Steve Robles—Sacramento, CA

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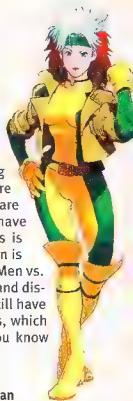


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egm letters



Oh, we can assure you, Trickman Terry is real. And ever since he took on his new Euro-punk House of Pain look, he's been real popular with the ladies. Bad haircuts are things of the past for Terry.

Sports Games In the 21st Century

You know all those sports games that have a year in their name, like NHL 98 and Triple Play 98? How will their names change going into the 21st century? Will we get an NHL 00? Or how about a Triple Play: The New Millennium?

nmo07001@inter.net.co

A representative from EA Sports, who wished to remain anonymous, told us that the names for their sports lineup in the year 2000 are absolutely TOP SECRET. He gave us the old, "We can tell you, but we'd have to kill you" routine. Don't worry. We'll eventually find out...even if it kills us. But whatever EA Sports decides to name their future games (we kinda like the sound of "NHL 2000"), it better be good. How cool can the name of a game get to be such a hush-hush secret?



NHL 98 (pictured here) looks and plays pretty good. But can you imagine what an NHL 2000 might look like on a PlayStation 4 or a Dural? We're drooling in anticipation.

How NOT To Do Secret Messages

Phew! So after hours of searching, I found your hidden message [issue #100], X-Men rule. Super way of hiding the message by giving a clue on page 229. Uh...it was hard, but I also found the hidden message in issue #102 in your response to Tom Donohoe's letter. Keep on putting hidden messages in your magazine. EGM does rule! So does the N64! (How else was I going to get an X in there? Give me a break guys!)

Ryan Sikrski - oldcrab@erols.com

SUKES? Holy bad secret message! Oldcrab here demonstrates exactly how doing secret messages can majorly backfire on you if you try too hard. Elephants are fun animals, if not a bit forgetful. If you insist on making secrets, you should double check your spelling. Sigh...youth these days. Kidding you of course, Mr. Sikrski (in case you couldn't tell, we like to give our readers a hard time once in a while). Isabelle is a girl's name. No it isn't. Gabriel is, however.

Saturn X-Men Vs. Street Fighter Update

I want to encourage Saturn owners to write or e-mail Sega of America to release X-Men vs. Street Fighter for the Saturn. If you want to see this game released in the U.S., write them and let them know!

Henry Suh - HenrySuh8821@juno.com

Well, it's not SoA that you want to contact, it's Capcom Entertainment here in America, but even that might not help at this

point. At the time of this writing, Capcom's sales force is out meeting with retailers to see how viable bringing out an American Saturn X-Men vs. Street Fighter might be.

The problem is, several major retail outlets, including Wal-Mart and Target, are clearing out their Saturn hardware and software inventory this spring. If too many stores are discontinuing Saturn products, then Capcom won't have enough ways to get the game into players' hands. This is unfortunate, but the hard truth of the matter is, the Saturn is not doing well here in the States. And as great a game X-Men vs. Street Fighter is, Capcom can't afford to market, package and distribute a game if no one is willing to sell it for them. We still have hope in the Best Buys, Toys 'R' Uses and specialty shops, which is what Capcom is checking into right now. We'll let you know what happens next issue.



How does an arcade-perfect, virtually no load time X-Men vs. Street Fighter sound? Believe us when we tell you that this game (Japanese version shown here) is awesome. Let's cross our fingers and hope this game will see the light of day in America.

Men Against Women Against Sexism

In response to all the girls complaining about how there should be more pictures of scantily clad men in your magazine: I'm sorry, but they should be thankful (including "Terra" from the 100th issue). In your December and February issues, you guys printed a Crash Bandicoot 2 advertisement and there were—huh? How many? Four muscular men in skimpy leopard-skin Speedos! And in the WCW vs. NWO and WCW Nitro ads, there were a total of eight men in Spandex wrestling suits. Altogether: 22 men. Looking through the issue, I only found five women in skimpy outfits. So "Terra" and her followers should lighten up and quit complaining!

Alex Kr'tselis Naperville, IL

We could be wrong, but we don't think that many females consider Giant in his tight wrestling outfit to be particularly sexy.

It's All Foreign To Us

What's the Japanese writing on the pages of the Import/Japanese previews? Are they the games' names in Japanese?

oUltiMa@aol.com

It says "International Previews." In the International News section, the Japanese text says "International News." Pretty creative, huh?

Question of the Moment

What classic games would you like to see revived for today's systems?

I would like to see TRON make a comeback.

ken.jalen@

saltriver.pima-maricopa.nsn.us

Call me crazy, but can anybody recall a decent home translation of Double Dragon?

TommyHand@classic.msn.com

Just to name a few: Solar Fox, Tron, Gorf, Karate Champ, Mat Mania, Zaxxon, Mouse Trap, Smurfs, Carnival and Renegade. Hope I brought back memories.

Inferred@aol.com

Kangaroo - A1ariz600.

cyberchimp@hotmail.com

Two words...Zelda Trilogy! naka@koan.com

Metroid. Definitely.

Snix03@aol.com

How about a 3 D River

Raid?

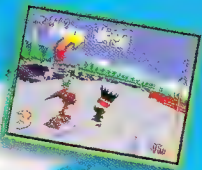
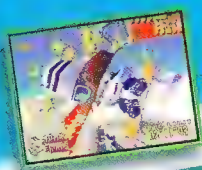
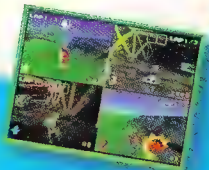
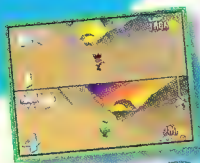
cloud@acsworld.net

I think Bubsy needs to be revived, even if Bubsy 3D sucked.

MASE4@prodigy.net

I'd like to see ASTEROIDS or, er, I mean ASTROD come back with killer graphics.

storm1271@aol.com



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-Nintendo Power, Pak Watch, Volume 103

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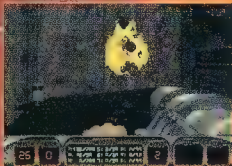
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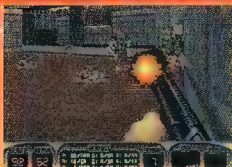
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HE'S GOING TO GET IT

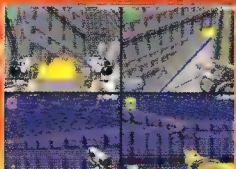
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COMING SOME!

NINTENDO64



GT Interactive
Software
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egm letters



WCW's (or is it NWO's?) Giant shows Shoe and Crispin what happens when someone insults him in the pages of *EGM*. Chances are, we won't be doing it again anytime soon.

Mystery Game Still A Mystery

I know for a fact that the game in question (in your January and February *EGM* Letters) IS NOT ASTROD. I have played the game myself, and I own it. I don't quite remember its name, but it came out for the Atari 800XL. The game had you flying around an asteroid field and shooting at the engine of some yellow alien ship and pushing it through the asteroid field. The game came out on either a cartridge or a 5 1/4" floppy. This was my favorite game from the early '80s. I believe it was called "Saturn Rings" or something like that.

Eddie McIntosh—emac@mindspring.com

Oh, OK. Thanks.

Psycho Goodwill Message Of The Month

Hi! This is Cloud! I think you magazine rules! (Thanks for making our game "Game of the Month.") I suppose you're all wondering what happened to us at the end of the game. Well I'm finally with Aeris again, and we're planning on getting married this January. A strange force somehow sent us here to your planet. We have to change our names to protect our identity. But I think I now know why we are here. We are here to save your dying planet! Never have I seen a planet so polluted! We are wondering if we should let Aeris go all the fun, but nah. I know you're laughing right now, but you'll see!

P.S. Please do not print my e-mail address (and my other name) as I do not want people to send me e-mail messages telling me I'm a crazy person!

Name and address withheld

Still Not Dealing With Sega

Is Working Designs planning on bringing out any games for Sega's new Dreamcast system?

denmj12@aol.com

The ever-quotable and outspoken president of Working Designs, Mr. Victor Ireland, replied, "Not unless the management changes [at Sega of America]." Mr. Ireland then went on and told us that his relationship with Sony is rocky as can be, so we can continue to expect PlayStation games from Working Designs. What about all the people who want to play Working Designs games but don't own a PlayStation? "I don't buy it when people say they can't afford another system," says Ireland. "For the cost of three games, they can save

up enough money to buy the 'other' system and get to play any game they want." Mr. Ireland did hint that he would love to bring out Dragon Force II for a Sega system in America...provided of course the management at SoA changes.

Can't we all just be friends? If for nothing else but to see Dragon Force II in the U.S.? Oh well, maybe Sega will bring it out themselves (PLEASE??). Make sure to check out the International Preview of DFII in this issue.



Time To Put This To Rest

In your last two issues, you've talked about the Atari 2600 game, *Asteroids* (in the Letters section). It seemed that the question has been answered, right? Wrong. I have a 2600, and I have the game. It is called *ASTEROIDS*.

NLraider@concentric.net

WE KNOW! For crying out loud, can't you people tell when we're being sarcastic? Do you honestly think we're not familiar with games *BM* (Before Mario)? We've played *Asteroids* (and its sequels and spin-offs) countless times. We've played the flickering, epileptic attack-inducing 2600 version when we were in our wonder years. Now please stop trying to enlighten us. We know what the game is called.

P.S. The only thing we do need help on is in obtaining a working copy of *ASTROD*. Any help there would be greatly appreciated.

AMAZING!

For the first time in three months, we don't need an OOPS section to correct our mistakes from the previous month. How about a nice round of applause? We'll savor the moment cuz it'll probably never happen again.



Letter Art

Where creativity, your favorite video game and a stamp can make you immortal!*

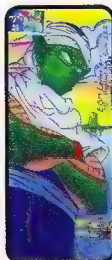
WINNER

Flavio Mireles
Monterey Park, CA

Congratulations, your prize is on the way—an ASCII Specialized Control Pad for the PlayStation. It features rapid-fire controls for all buttons and slow motion for those intense moments.



Close, but no controller



Juan Aguayo
Calexico, CA



Mark Crawford
Lexington, KY



Rit Lon
Silver Spring, MD

*Or at least get your name and work in the magazine and win yourself a great prize (FIRST PLACE ONLY).

Wanted: Non-Lara Croft and non-Dragon Ball Z envelope art. We've seen enough of those, don't ya think?

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Video Game News

The hottest gaming news on the planet

Can Sega Be Saved?

Sega's next system could take them to the next level or get them marooned on a distant planet

Things are not well at Sega of America headquarters. Having suffered a bleak 1997, Sega announced in mid-January that it has laid off 30 percent of its workforce, including marketing, public relations and product development staff. With that announcement, Sega officially confirmed the existence of a new "super" console (which is referred to here as Dural) to be released in North America in 1999.

"After evaluating the current industry situation and our plans for a new video game platform, we do not believe that launching this year is in the best interest of our customers, retailers or software partners," said Sega COO Bernie Stolar. "To be fiscally responsible and competitive tomorrow, we have to make some difficult decisions today that will put us on the right path for long-term success."

Sega's current position can be traced to the early days of Saturn. From the start, the Saturn had a tough time gaining popularity. Former Sega President Tom Kalinske, who is currently president of Knowledge Universe, an education technology firm, said that early on the price of Saturn was a huge roadblock. "The price issue caused us to do all kinds of things that if it had been priced correctly to start with, we wouldn't have done. We knew that Sony was going to come out at a lower price, and if we had been able to price correctly, we wouldn't have launched in the hurried fashion that we did and in just a few places. We would have launched everywhere at a lower price. In truth, [the Saturn] shouldn't have been launched at the time it was, and certainly we should have waited until we had both pricing and proper

software available."

Looking at Sega after he left, Kalinske says a few things have gone neglected that shouldn't have. "The thing that I think has gone wrong for them is they've walked away from some very important software franchises there should be better Sonic the Hedgehog games out, there should be better sports games out from Sega, not just third parties."

It's clear that mistakes from the early days of the Saturn cannot be repeated with Dural. As the Saturn disappears from the market and Sega's official confirmation of the Dural's existence, it's time to turn to look at how the company can regain its market dominance. Here are our suggestions for Sega:

THE DEAD PLANET

There is still a handful of loyal Saturn fans out there itching for new games, but with retailers quickly abandoning the system, it's going to be extremely difficult to get new software to players. There are going to be a handful of "must-have" games coming

Tom Kalinske gave Sega its most successful years with the Genesis, but left when the company landed on Saturn.

out in Japan that would be great to have English translations of (Grandia, X-Men Vs. Street Fighter, Phantasy Star Collection and all three scenarios of Shining Force III) in 1998. Fans have already begun petitions on the Internet to get some of these games released here. It's going to be important to cater to your loyalists in '98, even if that means resorting to direct sales to get software into gamers' hands. While some will say that Sega should kill the system off and be done with it, there's a lot to be said for keeping fans happy. Pick a few of the best Japanese games, and license them.



Sushi-X Files

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shawn_smith@zd.com
no, we're not the same person



The Racers

General Objectives: You can "beat" Sonic R simply by playing through it, but you wouldn't finish the game 100 percent. In order to *really* complete the game, you need to take on some tasks in each level. The best way to go about this is systematically. First, pick a character you're comfortable with and simply beat the first four courses. Next, unlock the game's secret characters. Each level has five Sonic tokens that are slightly off the beaten path. Collect them, place in the top three and then beat the secret character to make that racer selectable. Note that by unlocking a secret character, he/she will then compete against you and the other racers on each course (try to open the one you want and then wait on the others until after

you get the Emeralds). Your final goal is to find all of the Chaos Emeralds. The secret character you choose will make this easier due to his/her heightened abilities. The emeralds are hidden one or two per level, usually behind locked doors. Open these doors by collecting the number of coins shown above it. Note that you have to win the race in order to keep the emerald. For those courses that have two emeralds, only get one and then play through again to get the other. When you get all of the Chaos Emeralds, Gold Sonic is unlocked. He's the best racer of the bunch. A hearty thanks goes to EGM*, especially Ben Durbin. Check EGM* for the best strategies around.

Gold Sonic



Sonic

Sonic has the best top speed of the starting characters, but his cornering abilities are pretty bad. Sonic should do you well if you ease up on the corners.



Knuckles

Although Knuckles has a decent top speed and a nice gliding ability, he just can't seem to keep up with Sonic. He's a contender but not your best choice.



Tails

Tails has a nice flying ability which takes him over obstacles, but his top speed is pretty lame. If you play with him, you'll have to rely on shortcuts to win.



Amy

Amy can hover over water, but her weak turning and mediocre top speed make her a poor choice for racing. Use her to explore the levels.



Robotnik

Robotnik's homing missiles and hovering ability make him a tough opponent, but he still can't keep up with Sonic speed-wise. Poor Dr. Robotnik.



Metal Sonic

Metal Sonic is faster than his non-metal counterpart, but he still can't take corners all that well. With that said, watch your speed.



Teddy Tails

Basically like Tails but slower and wobbly, but if you know the shortcuts, beating the regular characters should be a cinch.



Metal Knuckles

Metal Knuckles can both hover and glide, plus his speed is admirable. Like Sonic and Metal Sonic, this version of Knuckles doesn't corner very well. Watch your speed.



Robot

Robot is good for two player fun (much like Robotnik). His one-player abilities are pretty lame, mainly because of his slow acceleration. He does have missiles.

Courses

Resort Island



Resort Island has one Chaos Emerald. The tricky part about the level is the secret character, Metal Sonic. Find shortcuts and watch those corners.

1



Radical City

This is probably the easiest track of the bunch, and the secret character is easy to beat. Keep an eye out for the two emeralds here.

2



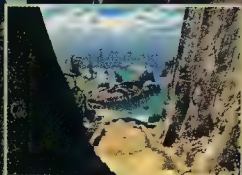
Regal Ruin

With lots of tight turns and fairly confusing routes, this track is definitely the toughest. The orange and yellow emeralds can be found in this level.

3

Continued on other side...

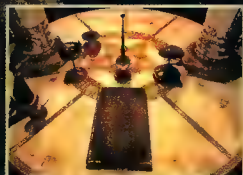
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CLEAN HOUSE

Many of the Saturn's woes are pinned on the guy who's currently at the wheel: Bernie Stolar. His comments at last year's E3 that "the Saturn is not our future" all but doomed the system to obscurity, a move which did nothing to reassure fans of the system's continued strength. The Internet has been ripe with comments like, "Bring back Tom Kalinske," and while that's not going to happen, SoA needs a strong leader and the kind of winning team that brought the Genesis to the forefront in the early '90s to usher in Dural.

WHAT GOES UP MUST COME DOWN

Sony may have scored a hit with the PlayStation, but as Sega has proven before, they can topple a monopoly with the right hardware and games. "There's no monopoly long term," said Al Nilsen, the "father of Sonic" and former group director of global marketing for Sega. "When we were first starting out with the Genesis, the consensus was that no one could knock Nintendo from their perch, and we did it." A '99 release of the Dural in America, which is what Sega says they're going to do, could come at the right time. Who knows when Sony will have PlayStation 2, so get in early.

BUILD IT RIGHT THIS TIME

The Saturn was criticized by some as a difficult machine to develop for. Take your time with Dural, and make it developer-friendly.

Manufacture the hardware yourself, don't take the 3DO approach. "It concerns me that I'm hearing all these rumors about different manufacturers making Sega's next machine. JVC and NEC and all those companies want to make money on hardware, they're not into the game of making money on the software," says Dave Perry, president of Shiny Entertainment, who says "They need to build it themselves."

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

It's worth looking at Nintendo's strategy with the N64: fewer games of better quality. Fortunately for Sega, their arcade teams have helped keep the Saturn afloat longer than it would have without them. Sonic Team and Team Andromeda (behind the Panzer Dragon series) need to be tapped to give the Dural a strong line-up at the beginning. Give us a real Sonic game for once, no Sonic 3-D Blast or Sonic Jam: a 2-D game is not a bad thing! Nilsen says, "It's not what's under the hood, it's what you do with what's under the hood." We couldn't agree more.



Bernie Stolar will oversee Sega's first steps into Dural territory. Will he be able to steer Sega back to industry dominance?

PRICE IS EVERYTHING

Consoles may be cheaper than high-end PCs, but are still expensive when they're released. The PlayStation debuted with a \$300 price tag, double what it retails for now. If you make the Dural inexpensive at the outset, pricing it competitively, there's a much better chance that gamers will want it. "I think in the end, a lot of people have looked at that \$199 price point as maybe a good starting point," said James Lin, an industry analyst at Wedbush Morgan Securities. "If you start out at \$249, you'll get a lot of the early adopters buying it, but Sega really needs to be aggressive with this new system." If it is in fact as "super" a system as Stolar says, then what better way to convince gamers that this is a must-have than to price it at \$250 or lower. As 3DO learned, a higher initial price is not a good thing—even if that's the way most major consumer electronics work.

MAKE IT WORTHWHILE

Whatever form Sega's next machine takes, it's going to need games from third-party developers to be a success. Victor Ireland, president of Working Designs, suggests Sega reduce their royalty fees to 1/4 of what they are now. Sega currently charges third parties as much as Sony to make games for the Saturn, a choice which hasn't done the system any good. Perry says that it's not royalty fees that will entice developers, but the quality of the hardware. Anticipate what kind of challenge Sony's next system will present.

As Sega gears up for the challenges ahead in 1999, the company's Saturn releases will probably slow to a crawl. If the rumors and speculation about its power are true, then gamers are going to be in for a treat. We'll be here in another year when Sega releases their new hardware in North America, ready to play.

Ingredients For Success

We talked to a few industry experts to get their thoughts on what Sega's next moves in 1998 with the Dural should be. We asked them what three or four things they would suggest Sega of America do in the months to come to push their next system to the kind of stellar success the Genesis had between 1989 and 1994. Here are some of the responses we got:

Al Nilsen, former group director of global marketing, Sega of America

- "Concentrate and focus efforts on a small number of titles that have the greatest potential to be great."
- "Develop a plan and execute it carefully. Don't go into this willy-nilly. Decide what, when, how and do that in advance. Anticipate your competitors."
- "Introduce your new platform at an aggressive price."
- "Do it when you're ready, not before."

Victor Ireland, president, Working Designs

- "Change management—specifically, send Bernie back to Sony."
- "Drop royalties by 3/4, put it at 1/4 of what it currently is."
- "Increase advertising."

Dave Perry, president, Shiny Ent.

- "Build the next machine yourself."
- "Use the arcade arm and that strength as much as possible."
- "Charge the least that your spreadsheets will allow for the machine from day one."

James Lin, vice president of research, Wedbush Morgan Securities

- "Marketing."
- "Look at your competition."
- "Don't try to rush a system out there just for the sake of getting a system out and being first to market."

What's Sega really planning for their next system? At this time, it's nothing more than speculation. But the above advice to them should definitely be things at the top of Sega's list. It's going to take a combination of the things we've said here for them to do it. Now, it's up to Sega.



Tidbits...

MK Goes Prime Time

According to a Variety report, Mortal Kombat is headed to TV in syndicated form next fall. Mortal Kombat has already been seen on the big screen in two successful films and in animated form on the Fox Kids Network, but this will be the first time the game's plot and characters show up in an hour-long weekly live-action show. Each episode will feature plentiful handfuls of Kombat action and special effects. The series will be run in syndication and produced by New Line Television and distributed by Warner Bros. This is the first time that a live-action television show based on a video game (other than the live-action segments from the Super Mario Super Show) has aired on U.S. TV.



Lower Price, Longer Wait

Nintendo lowers game prices but pushes back upcoming games

First the good news: Nintendo is lowering the price of seven top-selling Nintendo 64 games. But don't celebrate yet—there's another round of software delays headed your way.

As the new year began, Nintendo was back to work flexing its marketing muscle by announcing a "Player's Choice" line of Nintendo 64 titles, re-released at an MSRP of \$39.95 beginning Jan. 26. They include Nintendo's flagship N64 title Super Mario 64, as well as Mario Kart 64, Star Fox 64, Cruis'n USA, Wave Race 64, Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire and Acclaim's Turok: Dinosaur Hunter. A similar Player's Choice price plan has been in place for Super NES and Game Boy titles for some time.

Offering a lot of Miyamoto's N64 titles at such a price is undoubtedly a move to compete with Sony's "Power Price" structure announced last fall. While numbers on just how well Sony and Nintendo did this past holiday season haven't been released yet, it's sure to be a heated battle. Aside from lowering the price of software, both companies have one more step to try to one-up each other: hardware price drops. Those will most likely occur this spring at or before the annual Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Atlanta at the end of May.

A few days after unveiling the N64 Player's Choice line, Nintendo announced another round of game delays, putting some of their most

anticipated games further away than ever. Yoshi's Story will still appear on March 9, but Rare's Banjo-Kazooie has been pushed back to July 27, and MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr. has been pushed back to May 25. These delays also spell trouble for Zelda: The Ocarina of Time and F-Zero X, both of which are now next quarter 1998 releases or later. On the good side, at least Nintendo's spacing of quality titles means that N64 players will have at least one good game a month

www.nintendo.com

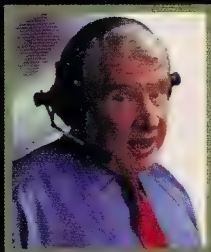
Mark Your Calendars...

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Yoshi's Story March 9 | 1080 Snowboarding April 1 | NBA Courtside April 27 |
| MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr. May 25 | Cruis'n World June 29 | Banjo Kazooie July 27 |

QBC Tackles Madden Acclaim trounces Electronic Arts at their own game

Released in October, Electronic Arts' Madden 64 found itself as the only Madden game in recent memory to not sport the NFL team and logo license. This was caused by Acclaim's shrewd marketing move of securing the NFL license exclusively for Nintendo 64 games during the 1997 NFL season through the Super Bowl in January. Madden and Quarterback Club duked it out on the air in a flurry of commercials for the two titles, promoted by their respective pitchmen, John Madden and Brett Favre.

The absence of the NFL license, along with Quarterback Club 98's ground-breaking graphics seems to have made a significant impact on the sales of Madden, propelling Acclaim's licensed game well above Madden 64 in the sales and rental charts. According to numbers compiled through November from the NPD Group, Quarterback Club was second among video games sales leaders, while Madden 64 trailed behind at number nine. Although numbers for December have not been reported, it is highly likely that the trend will continue, keeping Quarterback Club high atop its rivals.



Not even John Madden's mug on the box could save Madden 64.

www.acclaim.com, www.esports.com

Breaking a Sweat Fox begins developing sports games

Fox Interactive announced in December that it is entering the highly competitive arena of sports video games with a brand-new label—Fox Sports Interactive. To support the new line, Fox has hired the talents of British developer Gremlin, known for their Actua Sports series of games in the U.K.

The first games to come out of the Fox Sports Interactive label will be Fox Sports Hockey, Golf, Tennis and Soccer. All of these titles will be released on PlayStation and PC, and the hockey game (to be released at the start of the '98-'99 season) will carry the NHL and NHLPA licenses. "Having established Fox Interactive as a significant competitor in the video game arena, leveraging Fox Studio properties as well as developing our own characters and game franchises, we're eager to partner with Fox Sports to enter the sports video game market," said Jon Richmond, president of Fox Interactive. "The combination of that powerful branding with outstanding gameplay will produce the next generation of sports video games."

www.foxinteractive.com



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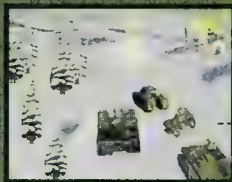
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WW3

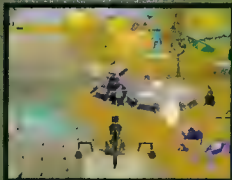
WILL BE FOUGHT ON THE PLAYSTATION™

The horror of global combat is coming to your living room. Twenty years ago, the WOPR, the deadly military supercomputer, nearly ignited the Cold War. Now the WOPR is back with a new mission: Exterminate humanity. You command NORAD's forces on land, at sea, and in the air as you plunge into battle against the WOPR's mechanical legions. The world's future hangs in the balance. It's not a game anymore.



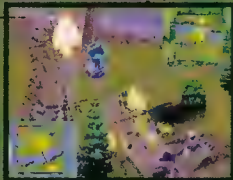
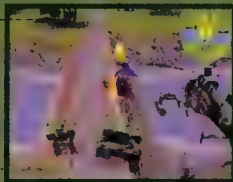
Command up to 8 killing machines at once and blow the WOPR's drones into silicon dust.

Launch strategic attacks with over 52 different assault units.



Turn friends into enemies in the PlayStation's first split-screen two-player combat game.

Feel the terror of combat as detailed graphics and a true 3-D environment bring battles to life.



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Tidbits...

Cool As Ice

Nintendo announced there will be a limited edition "Ice Blue" version of their huge, successful Game Boy Pocket on store shelves beginning in February. The price will be the same as current GB Pocket systems.

EVERYONE



Give Me An "E"

The Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB) is making a change to their ratings system beginning immediately with a new software titles released. They have changed their previous K-A rating

meaning Appropriate for Kids to Adults, to E—meaning Everyone.

The explanation is that the ESRB always wanted to use the E icon as a rating, but until now was unable to get permission from another company (not a ratings company) to use it. Now that that has happened, they have removed the K-A rating and replaced it. The new rating will only appear on new games; older titles will still carry the K-A symbol.

DigiCube Breaks 10 Million

Recently the DigiCube video game vending service announced that they have sold more than 10 million software units since the service started in Japan in November 1996. Retail revenue for the system is estimated at more than 60 billion yen (over \$400 million). The game that really made the DigiCube system work was Final Fantasy VII, which helped the company top 5 million units sold in May 1997.

At that time, 31 titles by 14 companies were offered. Today, that number has nearly doubled to 61 titles by 29 companies.

View to a Million

According to Nintendo, Diddy Kong Racing has become the fastest-selling video game in the U.S., selling more than 1 million units in 21 days after its release in late November 1997. DKR becomes the fifth No. 1 game to break 1 million in 1997, a list which includes Mario 64, Star Fox 64, Mario Kart 64 and GoldenEye 007.

Sega President Steps Down

Reports out of Japan indicate that Sega Enterprises President Hayao Nakayama will step down from his position, and that Sega of America Chairman and CEO Shoichiro Irimajiri will replace him. The replacement will occur in February.

Irimajiri, 55, joined Sega as vice president in 1991, after almost a 30-year career at Honda. There is speculation Nakayama is stepping down in order to take responsibility for the failed Sega-Bandai merger from last year, and Sega's less-than-stellar performance with the Saturn. Sega's expected to announce their new console in Japan this spring.

A Tale of Convergence

This year's Winter CES proved to be a digital experience

This year's Winter Consumer Electronics Show was held in Las Vegas from Jan. 8-11, sprawled across the Las Vegas Convention Center, the Las Vegas Hilton, the Sands Expo Center and Alexis Park. No video game companies were in sight, however, there were a bunch of new video game products there including peripherals, licensed products (like Mario cameras) and small TVs so you can take your game on the road.

But this year's Winter CES focused on high-end digital technology, including DVD, DSS, HDTV, DIV, D'vix and all those other high-tech phrases you've probably already heard a little bit about.

DVD, Digital Video Disc or Digital Versatile Disc, depending on who you talk to, was a dominant attraction at this year's show. Just about every hardware manufacturer had several new, sometimes cheaper models with additional bells and whistles tacked on for good measure. Panasonic's DVD-L10 was the most impressive of the new DVD products. It's a portable DVD video player with a 5.8-inch wide, 16:9/4:3 widescreen display. Weighing less than two pounds, it's a pricey portable at \$1,299.95.

Meanwhile, Sharp and Circuit City



The Winter CES took place during a particularly rainy January day in Las Vegas, Nevada.

become a success, and no company showed a Divx player on the show floor.

High Definition Television (HDTV) was on display again at this year's show, and it looks as if it might be closer than ever to reality. Satellite programming provider DirecTV was the first to demo a high-definition signal to the show. HDTV and DIV are both digital formats, resulting in a crisp, clear, high-resolution image.

One of the other "watch the demo but don't bother asking about the price" products are



Panasonic's portable DVD-L10 is small enough to hold in your hand, but HDTV isn't.

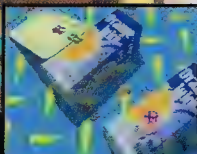
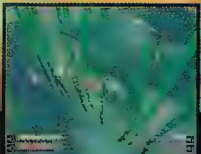
plasma televisions. Unbelievably flat (under six inches deep), Fujitsu's PlasmaVision and similar products from Mitsubishi, Panasonic, Philips, JVC and Hitachi were also the talk of the show. Thin enough to hang from a wall, it's expected that businesses will be the only ones capable of affording the \$10,000+ price tags of these new television sets.

Microsoft was in full force touting their Palm PCs, running on its Windows CE operating system. Windows CE was in other new electronic conveniences too, like cable boxes, car computers and digital organizers.

Those are just a few of the highlights of Winter CES. This is just the first trade show of the year—we will see many more, including the Tokyo Game Show in March and E! at the end of May. We'll have coverage of those shows as they happen on www.videogames.com.

took heat from consumers as we, as producers of DVD titles with their Divx format, Divx is an encoded DVD that will only play on Divx-compatible players (that also play standard DVD titles). You buy a Divx disc for \$5 and can play it as much as you want for 48 hours. Then your player will stop playing the encoded disc unless you pay for additional viewings through the Divx player. Designed to take out DVD rentals, the "format" has been criticized because it could easily lead to unwanted Divx discs stacking up like unused America Online discs. The DVD format continues to strengthen, making it less certain that Divx will ever

Haven't you always wanted to do it on the kitchen table?



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THE REVOLUTION

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Drive large.

Have you ever done it in the water? Are you any good on the billiards table? Do you find the backyard enticing? With over 40 unusual overhead courses, Micro Machines® V3 will change your perspective on racing. And because it's a true gamer's game, the tracks are short enough to remember, but extreme enough to repeatedly excite the experienced player. But don't worry - even the first time's good with Micro Machines V3. It's time to do it where you've only imagined before, with up to seven of your closest friends.

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Codemasters



International News

インターナショナル ニュース

Invasion of the Seizure-inducing Cartoons

Nintendo's *Pokemon* lights up controversy around the world in less than five seconds

While Pocket Monsters (*Pokemon*, for short) hasn't been released anywhere outside Japan, it's already making headlines worldwide. The highly successful Nintendo Game Boy title's animated counterpart became the center of attention following the show's Dec. 16 episode. During the episode in question, the characters were caught inside a computer being invaded by agents of evil. When an anti-virus program began firing missiles on the heroes and villains, Pikachu, the show's star, used his electrical field to destroy them, leading to a red and blue explosion which filled the screen but lasted only a few seconds.

That few seconds caused hundreds of children to flood Japanese hospitals. Doctors said the affected children went into a trance-like state and complained of shortness of breath, nausea and bad vision after the scene. Additional children were affected when they watched reports on television news which replayed the segment.

Experts determined the culprit was photosensitive epilepsy. This form of epilepsy is triggered by flashing or flickering lights, which if at a certain speed or intensity, can cause seizures. It occurs more

frequently in girls age 6-12 but can occur at any age regardless of gender. In fact, it was reported that a 58-year-old man was among those affected by the *Pokemon* episode.

Nintendo Co. Ltd. immediately distanced themselves from the show, saying that they have nothing to do with production other than the fact that it's based on their most popular video game series. Photosensitive epilepsy is also occasionally triggered by flashing lights in video games, which is why most games now carry epilepsy warnings.

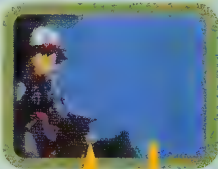
The U.S. press grabbed hold of the story and quickly found those who blamed it on the nature of Japanese animation. "Japanese animation is so different from what airs here," Mike Lazzo, vice president of programming for the Cartoon Network, told *USA Today*. "It's far edgier, more adult and violent. Anime isn't very story-based and is driven by intense moments. The story is hard to follow." Most critics have disagreed in the past, crediting anime with some of the best, most mature stories present in animation. In fact, there is a handful of Japanese animated series running on U.S. television, includ-



Pokemon was all over the news. Hey, what's that logo over there?

ing *Dragon Ball Z*, *Sailor Moon*, *Speed Racer* and *Voltron*. None of those shows have caused symptoms like those from *Pokemon*, nor is U.S. animation completely invulnerable from triggering photosensitive epilepsy.

However, the hype surrounding *Pokemon*, the cartoon that made so many Japanese children sick, made it an instant curiosity. So much so that New York-based 4 Kids Entertainment announced in early January their intentions to bring it to the U.S., which probably wouldn't have happened without the publicity triggered by the seizures. 4 Kids also said the flashy special effects will be removed from the show in its North American form. There is no word yet on exactly when the show will appear here.



These flashing blue-and-red lights sent Japanese kids to hospitals.

Sega Buys Into ASCII

Two Japanese media companies join forces

While in the U.S. we were celebrating the holiday season, in Japan, Sega and ASCII were busy announcing a new partnership. ASCII (makers of the extremely successful Derby Station PlayStation title) announced that they would allocate 5.5 million new shares of stock to CSK Corp. and 3.3 million to Sega Enterprises. Ko Okawa, CSK and Sega chairman, will serve as a special advisor to ASCII while ASCII director Sadaniko Hirose

will be a special advisor to Sega.

The deal forms a partnership between the two companies (CSK owns Sega) for the development of new business, software development and redemption of convertible bonds.

CSK said in a statement that the three companies will exchange advanced technologies to establish a solid future for CSK in the multimedia industry. No doubt this deal will also affect software for Sega's next system.

www.sega.co.jp, www.ascii.co.jp



Top 10 in Japan

The 10 Best-Selling Games As of Dec. 28

- 1 Densha De Go! (Taito)-PS
- 2 Grandia (Game Arts)-SS
- 3 Crash Bandicoot 2 (Sony)-PS
- 4 Rurouni Kenshin (Sony)-PS
- 5 Pocket Monsters (Nintendo)-GB
- 6 Front Mission Alternative (Square)-PS
- 7 Yoshi's Story (Nintendo)-N64
- 8 The Company 2 (Human)-PS
- 9 Rockman Dash (Capcom)-PS
- 10 Everybody's Golf (Sony)-PS



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The undisputed
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racing games!"**

-Ops and Tricks

before
you
do.

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What Kind of a Maniac Takes a Semi

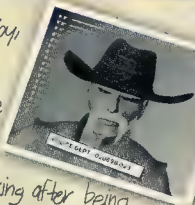


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Into Off-Road Combat?

ACTIVISION.

Meet Conroy,
righteous
leader of the
Vigilantes.



He quit trucking after being
ambushed by the rival oil-thieving
"Coyotes" for the last time.
Now he's taking the law into his
own hands.

VIGILANTE 8ES

So Much Power
It's Crazy.

- Eight Battle-Anywhere, Fully Destructible Arenas
- Eight Character-Based Muscle Cars, Trucks and More
- Over-the-Top Weapons and Attack Moves
- Unprecedented 3-D Graphics and Effects
- Two-Player Split-Screen Auto Combat
- Behind-the-Wheel or Behind-the-Car Views

Quartermann

- Bad news from Nintendo Japan
- The resurrection of Blanka?
- Even worse news from NoA
- Hyper-fighting on the Saturn?
- N64 successor due no time soon
- Two-player Time Crisis sequel

Welcome to this month's episode of Quartermann. Terry Aki (EGM's naughty N'pioneer news ninja) 's back at his HQ in Shinjuku, Japan. Our new Italian informant, Tommy Gotch, has settled into our European base in Manchester, England and I have entrenched myself at my home in sunny Silicon Valley, Calif. Springtime signals the time of the year when we all unpack our suitcases; fire up our computers and, for once, enjoy our homes, none.

TROUBLE BREWING AT NINTENDO

(Kyoto, Japan) Terry Aki reports that a major 64 Bit shakeup is due from Nintendo. According to our Japanese super-sleuth, Nintendo's new 64DD peripheral is at the epicenter of this quake. Although everything about the 64DD is going according to plan in Japan, NCL (Nintendo of Japan) will be delaying the U.S. intro of the 64DD to first quarter '99 at the earliest and there's even a chance Nintendo may not release the N64 upgrade at all in the U.S. From what we hear, the reasons for this uncertain thinking are as multifaceted as the potential fallout. First of all, although games like Pokémon Snap, Taekwondo and SimCity should fly right in Japan, none of these games will sell *hardcore* in the U.S. Although certain DD games on the horizon could make a killing here (The DD version of Zelda is one and Mario 64 II is another), none of those games will be ready for the U.S. in '98. So...problem #1: lack of software. Another problem is NCL's lukewarm interest of the U.S. market. In Japan, where the N64 is #3 behind the PlayStation and Saturn, releasing the 64DD is crucial. Japanese gamers haven't exactly welcomed cartridges with open arms and because of this (plus the fact that the goods costs of N64 carts are much more expensive than a CD), the Japanese third party development community has slowly warmed to N64 development. The 64DD could change all this since DD goods costs should be much more competitive with CDs and popular games (in Japan) such as RPGs and sims should be easier to produce on 64 Megabyte DD disks, plus the writability aspect of the DD64 caters to RPGs and sims better than action games anyway. In the U.S., it's a much different story. Hardware upgrades in the U.S. don't have the same history of success (either success for that matter) as the Japanese upgrades (the PC Engine CD was a roaring success). It's compounded by the fact that the N64 is a big success in the U.S., and as such is a reliable revenue stream for Nintendo of Japan. If the 64DD is released in the U.S., Nintendo will be forced to spend big marketing dollars to convince consumers that they can't live without a 64DD. Now, that money will have to come from somewhere (either Nintendo will devote some of the N64's marketing dollars over to the DD or cough up even more bucks solely for the 64DD). To Nintendo of Japan (and have no illusions, NCL calls all the shots), spending money in the soft Japanese market makes more sense than spending that same money in a robust U.S. market that doesn't need it quite as badly. Translation: If it ain't broke, why spend millions to fix it? Although both of us wish it weren't so, Terry assures me that yes, the American 64DD is on life support and is fading fast. My one question in this whole drama is this: If the 64DD doesn't materialize in the U.S., how's NOA going to fill its gap with N64 games? ...read on...

AH, BUT THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING

(Redmond, Wash.) If you think news of the 64DD not making it to the U.S. is bad, then you're gonna just lose it when you hear what NOA is planning now. Our sources tell us that since Nintendo of America probably won't have a 64DD to sell, they plan on stretching out the release schedule of their N64 games. Bottom line: deays, delays and more deays. You may have already read about the delays of Ken Griffey and Banjo Kazooie in this month's Video Game News section of EGM (page 28), but I assure you that this is just the tip of the massive iceberg. Don't expect to see F-Zero X any sooner than third quarter '98 and Conquers Quest is said to be a late

November release. So you think you're gonna play Zelda 64 in 1998? Dream on. We hear Zelda 64 will be a first quarter 1999 release at best. "But why would NOA risk burning their loyal followers with even more delays?" you ask? Well...because they can't remember the Nintendo/Yog Berra mantra? If it ain't broke, why fix it? Well, almost every first- and second-party N64 game has been delayed at some point or another and Nintendo's followers have shown their displeasure by buying the games in record numbers. I mean, do you really think a six- to eight-month delay of Ze da 64, s going to prevent the game from selling millions of copies? Ze da 3 wasn't released until after several delays and that game went on to become the best-selling SNES game up to that point. As a sidenote, the successor to the N64 (not to be confused with the LDD 239 project) is well under development at MIPS/Silicon Graphics and due to hit Japan early in 2001, a mere two years after we get to play Zelda. If Nintendo gets their way, we get to see their silk pockets with buckets of cash earned from the bones they throw our way every few months. Do you ever notice how the more things change, the more they stay the same?

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

(Osaka, Japan) Unlike some OTHER companies, Capcom has plenty of games to entertain us in 1998. First is Vampire Savior for the Saturn. VS is already out and running but will require the 4 Meg RAM cart. Look for Vampire Savior this summer in Japan. Another arcade game coming to the console is Puzzle Fighter/Gem Fighter. Look for this title on the Saturn and PS around the third quarter in Japan and Christmas '98 here. The big news at Capcom, however, surrounds SF Collection 2. Since Capcom has sold enough copies of the SF games nobody asked for, they can now release the games we really want: Namey Street Fighter, SF2, SF2: CE and Hyper Fighting. Unlike the first collection, this compilation will put all five games on only one CD. The release date is up in the air right now but the games are coming out this year. On the arcade front, look for some killer games to surface at the AOU show this month in Japan. First on the list is SF Zero 3. Known as Alpha 3 in the U.S., Zero 3 is said to feature new (or, s that o.d?) characters to the Zero series including Guile, Honda and (drum roll please) the long-awaited return of Blanka. The CPS 2-powered Zero 3 is due out in Japan in May and Alpha 3 will come our way in July. The AOU show will also mark the official rollout of Final Fight EX/ Marvel vs. Capcom and Rival Schools (united by fate, Capcom's latest 3-D fighter. At past AOU shows, Capcom traditionally previewed one game on tape that they would later show at the Jamma show in the fall. We hear that the game in question will, either be Star Gladiator 2 or Akira Nishitani's newest fighting game, Street Fighter EX 2. Another Jamma rumor is that there's a chance Capcom's booth will be the host to a prototype version of the Dural arcade board.

QUICKIES

Speaking of the AOU show, other high-profile coin-op games are due to appear there, including Virtua Cop 3 and the final version of Virtua... On 2. Both games will run on Model 3 hardware. VC 3 is due out in the third quarter of 1998; Virtua On 2 should hit Japanese arcades second quarter '98. Namco will use the AOU to show off Time Crisis 2. Although we don't know exactly what hardware Time Crisis 2 will run on, we do know the game is a two-player title with dual monitors and audio pedals. The idea here is that one player can cover the other while the ducking player reloads. TC2 is also due out this summer in Japan.

Sony is planning to release a Gozillia game for the PlayStation this summer. Based on the upcoming major motion picture, Sony's game is their big title for this summer and is said to be quite hot.

Well, sports fans, that wraps up another issue of Quartermann. Next month we have lots of cool rumors and gaming dirt to satisfy even the hungriest gaming appetite. Tune in next month when we uncover news on Namco's new fighting game as well as more Dural info. Keep in mind, you can conserve a lot just by watchin'.

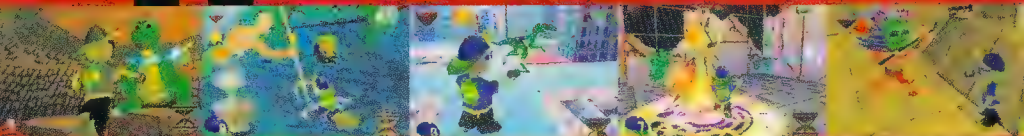


www.playstation.com

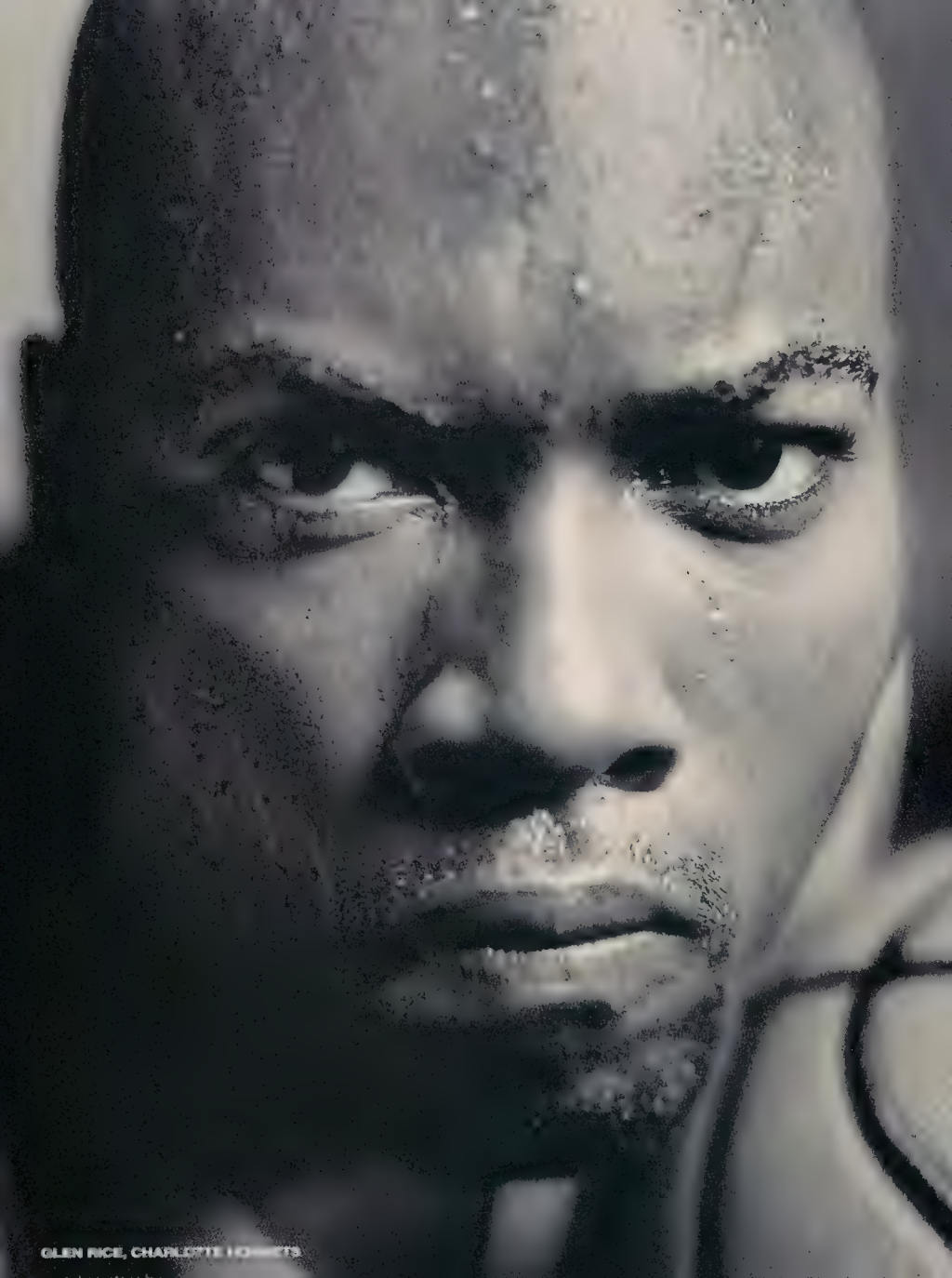


GIVE HISTORY A WEDGIE

Historical fantasies are weaving, thanks to a sneaky kid named Rascal. He's a champion to return his dad from an evil TimeLord. As he travels through time, he'll explore 18 different levels spread across past, present and future. He'll also have to zap bad guys, embryos, and prehistoric worlds that display some of the most impressive 3D graphics in a PlayStation game. (Next Generation). So keep your eyes open. And bad guys watch your backs.



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GLEN RICE, CHARLOTTE HORNBETTS

I'd go to the schoolyard
and shoot 'til it got dark.
And then I'd keep shooting
So I can make this shot
with my eyes closed.

**But now, my hands
are your hands.
Drain it.**

[illegible]

Nintendo 64

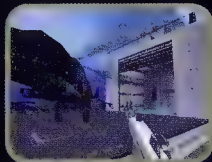
PREVIEWS

Game Directory

- Mystical Ninja Starring Goemon
- NHL Breakaway '98
- Virtual Chess 64

In Nintendo News...

As expected, Nintendo had an excellent holiday season. Software sales were brisk, and GoldenEye cartridges were extremely hard to come by. In an effort to keep the fervor alive, Nintendo recently announced their Player's Choice line of games which sell for \$39 games. Also, Yoshi's Story finally launched in Japan to a surprising reception. Only 50,000 units were sold in the first week, which by Japanese



GoldenEye was the benefit of a sales revival, becoming a scarce commodity during the holidays.

sales standards is a very lukewarm reception. Such is indicative of Nintendo's position in Japan, which could best be described as precarious.

Help may be on the way for Nintendo, as popular software developer SquareSoft is rumored to be an official N64 licensee and will release their first game in 1999. Their first title is allegedly the next Secret of Mana game, Square's only series that has not yet been ported to the PlayStation. If this proves true, it takes away the biggest asset the PlayStation had against the Big N. We'll keep you updated.

The Legend Returns—Finally

Mystical Ninja starring Goemon

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Konami
Konami 1
Action 95 March
1998

Web Address: www.konami.com

As many veteran gamers will surely remember, The Legend of the Mystical Ninja series first appeared on the Super Nintendo shortly after it debuted in 1991. The game drew a loyal following, but those who lowers have been kept waiting an uncharacteristically long time (close to seven years to be exact) for the next in the series—even though several Japanese sequels were made that never made it to U.S. shores.

For those of you who might not have played this title's predecessor, Mystical Ninja is a game carved from an odd niche. It combines adventure, RPG and arcade elements, and melds it all into an action game with a wacky and off-beat sense of humor. What other game would put you in perilous danger for calling a character a weirdo?

You control Goemon, a blue-haired, anime-style ninja who is given the tall order of saving feudal Japan from a weird, peach-shaped U.F.O. that has appeared in the peaceful town of Oedo. To remedy the situation, Goemon must travel around Japan and specifically, the countryside surrounding Oedo, in an effort to equip himself with powerful weapons and objects. These include giant robots, various magic spells and different types of pipes, hammers and armor in



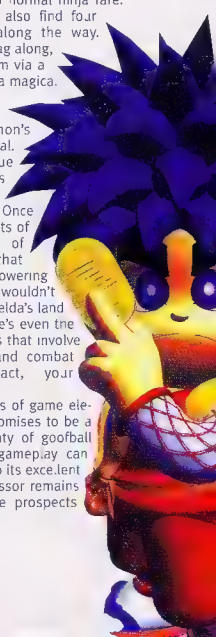
Walking around town to find and buy various items before going into battle is essential.



addition to normal ninja fare. Goemon can also find four different allies along the way. Instead of having them tag along, he simply turns into them via a press of the button and a magical puff of smoke.

Thanks to the game's 3-D makeover, Goemon's world is incredibly visceral. In fact, one might argue that Mystical Ninja looks like a cross between Zelda 64 and Mario 64. Once Goemon leaves the streets of Oedo, there's plenty of Mario-esque terrain that must be explored, here, towering castles can be found that wouldn't be out of place even in Zelda's land of Hyrule. And then there's even the action-packed sequences that involve first-person, hand-to-hand combat which includes Impact, your trusty robot.

With its colorful canvas of game elements, Mystical Ninja promises to be a popular game with plenty of goofball elements. Whether its gameplay can make the game live up to its excellent Super Nintendo predecessor remains to be seen. So far, the prospects look good. ☺



NHL Breakaway '98

Acclaim Ices Their N64 Sports Lineup



Following the success of their popular N64 football game, NFL Quarterback Club '98, Acclaim hopes to accomplish the same feat on ice with NHL Breakaway '98. Consequently, you'll see some similarities between the two games, namely the 3-D hi-res graphics that garnered so much praise for the aforementioned pigskin game.

Aesthetics aside, Breakaway is a little different from the average hockey title. Players can win points during the season that allow them to improve coaching, player development and injury therapies in addition to just having the requisite season options. Kinda makes it sound like a sports RPG in a way, doesn't it?

Even though it has these eccentricities, Breakaway still strives to be a realistic hockey simulation. Teams play their respective strategic styles, you can use different coaching strategies, and player weights and sizes are factored into checking. A so, Breakaway is the only N64 hockey game to allow you to use Olympic teams in addition to the usual NHL suspects (unlike Midway who broke these teams into two separate games).

Although the PlayStation version of Breakaway wasn't too impressive, it is entirely possible that this one could spark a turnaround for the series by taking advantage of the N64's hardware as well as more development time. ☹



Breakaway's hi-res graphics allow for plenty of on-screen action.



Oh, yes, the glowing puck made famous by FOX Sports is available as an option.

Virtual Chess 64

It's no secret that chess games aren't the favorites of most gamers, but there are those people out there who fancy themselves armchair strategists, or are just curious about this so-called "high-brow" game. For this reason, Titus is bringing us Virtual Chess 64 for the Nintendo 64.

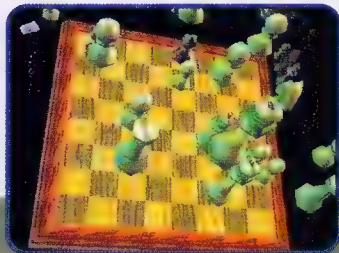
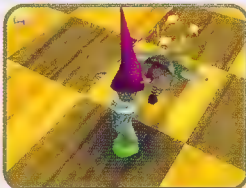
From what we've seen from screen shots, VC64 resembles Battle Chess with its unique chess pieces battling each other along with their humorous animations.

Instead of sprites duking it out like in Battle Chess, this one features full polygonal graphics and multiple camera angles.

Besides the nice-looking graphics, the title also features Titus' award-winning chess-specific AI technology. Their AI automatically adjusts its difficulty depending on the player it's up against. If you're a novice, the computer opponent will change accordingly,

and vice-versa. This one should appeal to both die-hard fans of chess as well as those who simply want to dabble.

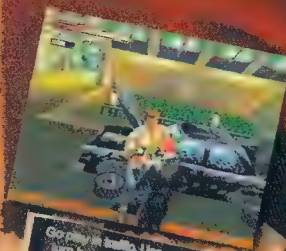
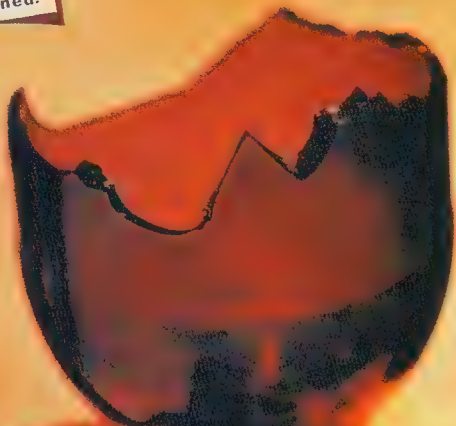
Chances are you'll be able to rotate the chess board to any angle for the best view.



EIDOS

You've been warned.

CORE



Gortys is built. Use screaming car to turn hoodlums into hood ornaments.



Fight alone or share the car. Whichever. Mix it up with Machine Smeasher & Alend.



There is no ring, no referee and no winner the bull's balls. Well, meet Mr. Krow.



**"LOOK BOTH WAYS
BEFORE CROSSING THE
STREET. THEY USUALLY
ATTACK IN PAIRS."**

- Hawk Manson

YOU WANNA FIGHT? TAKE IT OUTSIDE. BECAUSE THIS BATTLE IS TOO BIG FOR SOME SKINNY

ASS ARENA. 4 KILLER CHARACTERS. DOZENS OF BRUTAL WEAPONS. TONS OF CRUSHING MOVES. AND VICIOUS 3D ACTION THAT GOES SO FAST, THERE'S ONLY TIME TO REMEMBER HALF THE GOLDEN RULE.

SO BY ANY AND ALL MEANS, DO UNTO OTHERS. BECAUSE IN YOUR HANDS, ALMOST ANYTHING CAN BECOME A WEAPON. JUST REMEMBER TO WASH THEM AFTERWARDS.



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www.fightingforce.com

Saturn

Previews

Game Directory

- Shining Force III
- Winter Heat
- Dragon Force II
- D&D Collection
- Solo Crisis

In Sega News

The Saturn's fate has finally been sealed by an official announcement from Sega confirming that they are developing a new console system that will be released in North America in 1999. Bernie Stolar, COO of Sega of America, also confirmed that Sega has begun the process of briefing third-party developers on the new platform in addition to working with retailers on the transition between the Saturn and the new system. In the meantime, Sega eliminated 30 percent of their workforce, citing that the company needed to "remain financially responsible in the interim."



The finished X-Men Vs. Street Fighter is presently on hiatus because of the Saturn's demise.

Such a statement has already caused ripples throughout the industry, as retailers have begun marking down their Saturn titles to unbelievably low prices in an effort to clear them out. Also, it has made software developers uncertain on whether they should go forth with games already in development or ready to ship. The most high-profile game in this situation is Capcom's X-Men Vs. Street Fighter, which is in a constant state of flux as to its arrival in the States.

The Classic Strategy/RPG Returns

Shining Force III

Publisher/Developer: Sega of America
Sonic Soft./Camelot
Players/Genre: 1
Strategy/RPG
% Done: 50
Release: May 1998
Web Address: www.sega.com

Sega's Shining Force series was the first 16 Bit strategy/RPG series to really take off in the U.S. After a three-year hiatus, the latest addition to the series, Shining Force III, is finally on the way.

Shining Force III is actually just the first part of a three disc story. In Japan, this one is known as Scenario 1 (which was first released in December), and once you finish it (it's as long as your average one disc game, which is a big plus), you'll be able to move on to Scenario 2 which is due out in Japan in the spring. The unique method of storytelling is dubbed the "Synchronicity System," where each

Scenario will take place during the same time period, but from different sides of the same large story. Sounds very cool to us. Unfortunately, only the first Scenario is scheduled for U.S. release right now (too bad, since Europe is getting all three in one package), but there's still a chance we'll get lucky and see the whole thing.

Shining Force III improves upon its predecessors in many ways. First and foremost, the entire game world is constructed of polygons for a completely 3-D environment. The result is stunning. You can rotate the camera 360 degrees in either direction using the L and R buttons, and there are three viewpoints you can choose from as well (near, medium and far). The ability to move the camera around is great when looking for hidden treasures and characters that you might not have normally seen. Game characters are still 2-D (don't worry, it mixes well), but when the game switches to the up-close battle sequences (for which previous Shining Force games were very popular), everything changes to a

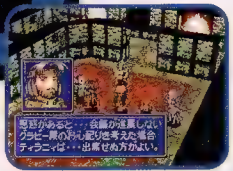


completely 3-D polygonal environment with gorgeous animation and special effects. Just as the old 2-D battles were a marvel for the Genesis, such 's the case now with these new 3-D battles on the Saturn. Impressive.

There's also new types of spells (like ones that summon monsters), new battle techniques (in particular, the ability to develop stronger friendships with certain characters, thus increasing battle abilities when the two are near, is very cool) and even ana.og control.

Saturn fans may not have as many games to look forward to this year as they'd have hoped, but Shining Force III is certainly going to be one to watch for. It's currently due out in May, and we'll be back with a review when we receive a finished version of this very promising game.

Every gamer appreciates a fancy explosion like the ones in Shining Force III.



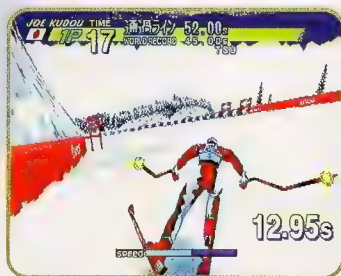
Battles take place on gridded battlefields, only now all of the game environments are fully 3-D.

Winter Heat

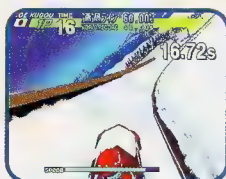
Nagano
 Olympics,
 DecAthelete
 Style

After playing DecAthelete time and time again, many of us here at EGM wondered if we'd ever be fortunate enough to play a sequel. Well, some time has passed and now we're happy to say yes. Winter Heat gives us the same fun and excitement that DecAthelete gave, except this time it all takes place in a winter wonderland.

Winter Heat plays off of the whole Nagano craze (due to the fact that the Winter Olympics are taking place this year). But unlike other Olympic games that have recently landed on store shelves, Winter Heat takes the style of gaming back to the arcade. Gamers not familiar with the DecAthelete style of play need



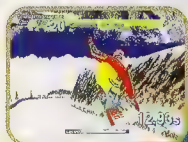
Watch those corners while on the bobbed or you'll do the old floppy, floppy.



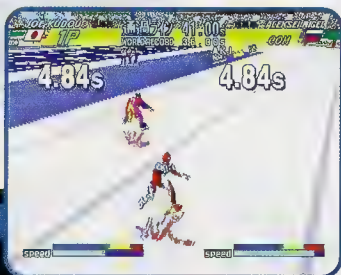
much like DecAthelete, a graphical tutorial explains how the controls in the event work (and what'll happen if you don't do it right). After this, the events start and there's no looking back.

With eight characters and 11 events to select from, you won't run out of fun too quickly. The characters, most of whom are from DecAthelete, all have unique abilities which allow them to excel in a particular event or two. On top of these original players, Winter Heat has two new Olympians for you to experiment with.

Whatever character you may choose, the events will have you trying your hardest to break world record after world record. Of course, playing a relatively sporty game all by your lonesome can be tedious at times. That's why Winter Heat allows you to compete against a friend and try to beat their best time, score or distance.



The changing camera angles in Winter Heat are simply stunning.



Watch your stamina level closely, or your character will make a silly noise.

only think back to the days of Track & Field, and the blisters and/or callouses caused by rapid-fire button tapping.

Besides the standard finger speed test, many of the events like bobsled and speed skating have you manipulating the D-pad as well as making timed button taps.

For example, the downhill skiing event has you controlling the character down the course, tapping a couple buttons for speed now and again, and hitting another button to prepare for small jumps along the way. Although these controls may sound complex, they're far from that.

Before each event,

My 2 Cents

I am a big fan of DecAthelete, so I was obviously excited to hear about Winter Heat. So far, the game is really nice—easily the best Winter Olympic game out there right now. I love the easy-to-use control, sharp graphics, cool events and fun characters. This is what an Olympic game should be. Now, let's hope the final version stays good!

—Shawn Smith



Mike Hewitt / Allsport



Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. Import at your own risk.

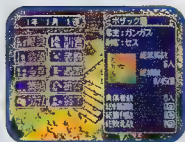


| Publisher/Developer | Players/Genre | % Done | Release |
|---|----------------|--------|------------|
| Sega Enterprises, Ltd. | 1 Strategy/RPG | N/A | March 1998 |
| Web Address: www.sega.co.jp | | | |

インターナショナル アリビュース

Dragon Force II

The Ultimate War Game Returns



You can say we're fans of Dragon Force. After all, it won Game of the Month, 1996 Saturn Game of the Year, 1996 Strategy Game of the Year and came close to winning the 1996 Overl Game of the Year. Now, the EGM office is buzzing with excitement after seeing early screen shots of the sequel. But this excitement quickly grew to disappointment upon realization that chances of this game coming to America are next to nothing.

Dragon Force II, like its predecessor, is a strategy game of grand proportions. You command huge armies of up to 200 troops. You must decide which army (based on the general's statistics, unit type and magical items equipped) to send into which battle against whom. Success all depends on intelligent battlefield decisions.

What's new in the sequel is still sketchy at this point. We do know that DFI has a sub leader system (possibly meaning lower-ranked commanders who help out generals) and a laboratory system (now you have a new command "research" on your administrative screens—this will allow you to learn new abilities). We also know some battles can take place underground in dungeons.

The biggest change from the first game, however, is how troops are deployed in battle. It looks like

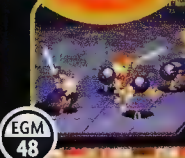
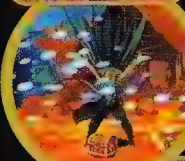


100 unit-groups are still the largest possible, but now you can have two different types in the same outfit. You'll be able to split up your forces and have ground troops supported by air troops in the same skirmish.

One thing's for sure: Working Designs will NOT be bringing this game over to the U.S. And with the Saturn business being the way it is, it's nighly doubtful that Sega of America will bring out the game themselves (strategy games generally don't sell into very high figures, and most retailers aren't selling Saturn games anyway—double whammy!).

| Publisher/Developer | Players/Genre | % Done | Release |
|---|---------------|--------|--------------|
| Capcom Co., Ltd. | 1-2 Action | 65 | 2nd Qtr. '98 |
| Web Address: www.capcom.co.jp | | | |

Dungeons & Dragons Collection

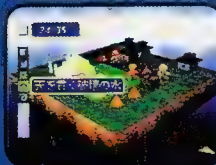
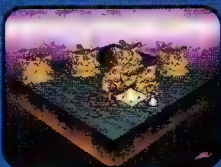


Capcom's popular Dungeons & Dragons arcade games are finally on the way to the Saturn in Japan in one hot compilation called Dungeons & Dragons Collection. The two games, Tower of Doom and Shadow Over Mystara, look hot, and Shadow Over Mystara will support the new 4-Meg RAM cart that was introduced with X-Men Vs. Street Fighter. If the conversions are as perfect (yes, PERFECT) as X-Men Vs. Street Fighter, we'll all be in for a nice treat. Sadly, it's doubtful that it'll make it to the U.S., though a slightly inferior PlayStation version is expected to be released here later in the year. Expect an in-depth preview of that one later on when it nears its completion.

| Publisher/Developer | Players/Genre | % Done | Release |
|---|---------------|--------|------------|
| ESP | 1 Simulation | 100 | Next Japan |
| Web Address: www.esptek.co.jp | | | |

Solo Crisis

Quintet, the Japanese development team responsible for many 16-Bit classics, including ActRaiser, Soul Blazer, Illusion of Gaia and more, are about to release their first Saturn title—a polygonal strategy sim called Solo Crisis. Gameplay takes place on gridded battlefields (similar to say, Vandal Hearts or Tactics Ogre), and the object is to do battle for the forces of God against the devil and his armies. Many factors come into play, including



terrain, faith of the population, magic power and more. Considering Quintet's track record for uniqueness, Solo Crisis has the potential to be a big hit with strategy fans. Too bad we'll never see it in the U.S.



The French sure know how to drive.



I sure hope Santa brings us a new turbocharger!



Christian makes us proud, again.



Granny can get that chain moving!



Rex - our team dog.

Join America's favorite racing family.



Newman/Haas Racing.
We've got racing in our blood.



PlayStation

Previews

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- Tekken 3
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- Dead or Alive
- Bloody Roar
- Rebus
- Tactics Ogre
- WarGames
- Supercross '98
- ReBoot
- SaGa Frontier
- G-Darius

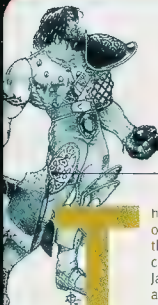
In Sony News...

Sony remains quiet about the PlayStation's future in 1998, but it is certain that the end of 1997 was an excellent one. In fact, a million systems were sold in the month of November alone. In software news, *Einhander*, Square's first shooter (a 3-D one), will be brought to the States by Sony in addition to *Gran Turismo*, an incredibly



Strangely, nothing is better than being able to drive your own car in a video game. Pictured is the *Acura Integra*, Cyril, Kraig and Andrew's vehicle of choice.

In-depth racing game. Hopefully when it arrives in the U.S., most of the car licenses will remain intact. We have our doubts, however. Also, if you want to control these new games with something different, the Dual Shock Analog controller is available throughout Japan. This analog controller is a little different, as it causes vibrations on the left and right sides of the controller independently. Hopefully, this whimsical vibrating controller will (and should) make it to U.S. stores within a few months.



Take A Shot At The Devil

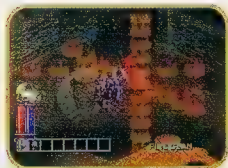
Diablo

The PC version of *Diablo* is one of the rare American games that found overwhelming success in both the U.S. and Japan. Such conditions guarantee a console conversion, and finally, here it is.

For those who don't pay attention to computer games, *Diablo* is a unique action-RPG whose game design transcends typical genres. Exploring dungeons and improving your characters' is a large part of this game, but being quick with the controls will help you live longer. Combat is fast-paced, but is executed by highlighting the enemy you wish to attack and then pressing the button.

Although that might not sound action-packed, it actually is because you must quickly readjust your point of attack or select different spells so that you can compensate for ever-changing dangers. Once the battle gets heated, it is advisable to rely on your arcade skills and quick reactions to move your character out of harm's way.

These skills will only get you so far. There are over 300 different items that include staffs, swords, shields, rings, helmets and potions for you to find in the 16 different labyrinths. If you get wealthy enough from slaughtering its inhabitants, you can even buy some interesting things in town. Which items you can use depend on your character class (Warrior, Rogue, Sorcerer). For example, a Warrior is at home slicing and dicing with a huge axe, while a Sorcerer can't even hold it.



Multiple firewalls are guaranteed to clear the halls of dungeon vermin.

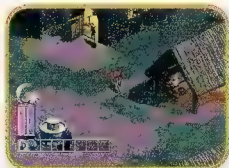
Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Electronic Arts 1-2 March
Climax Ent., Ltd. Action/RPG 70 1998

Web Address: www.aa.com

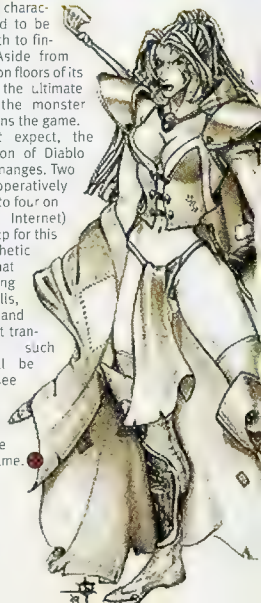


Look busy? This is typical of many dungeon encounters in *Diablo*, where the action is furious and often fatal (above).



Regardless of which class your character is, you'll need to be armed to the teeth to finish the game. Aside from wiping the dungeon floors of its resident vermin, the ultimate goal is to kill the monster whose name adorns the game.

As you might expect, the PlayStation version of *Diablo* has some major changes. Two players can cooperatively play, as opposed to four on the PC (via Internet). Partially making up for this are some aesthetic enhancements that include new lighting effects on spells, dungeon lighting and some day-to-night transitions. With such changes, it will be interesting to see how these trace offs impact the first console adaption of the blockbuster PC game.



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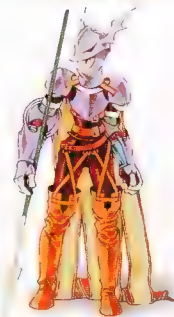
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Princess Ovella Atkascha

She is the adopted daughter of the late King Omdoria III and his wife Queen Ruvella. Sheltered throughout her childhood in the safety of Orbonne Monastery, Princess Ovella Atkascha finds herself in the middle of controversy surrounding her succession to the throne.

For more information on Princess Ovella Atkascha, get **Prima Publishing's** official Final Fantasy Tactics strategy guide.

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SQUARESOFT PlayStation

Delita Hyral

Delita Hyral is the childhood friend of Ramza and the Beoulve family. After the death of his sister Teta, he becomes deeply involved in the War of the Lions—although which side he's fighting on is anyone's guess!

For more information on Delita Hyral, get **Prima Publishing's** official Final Fantasy Tactics strategy guide.

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SQUARESOFT PlayStation

Ramza Beoulve

The youngest son of the Beoulve family and hero of our story, Ramza Beoulve becomes involved in the search for the Zodiac Stones after witnessing the kidnapping of Princess Ovella.

For more information on Ramza Beoulve, get **Prima Publishing's** official Final Fantasy Tactics strategy guide.

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SQUARESOFT PlayStation

Summoner

Requirements: Time Mage Level Two
Weapons: Rod, Staff
Helmet: Hat
Armor: Clothes, Robe

Pro: With its MA strength and MP bonuses, the Summoner is one of the game's strongest magicians.

Con: Having one of the largest HP and AT strength handicaps (next to the Bard) leaves this character vulnerable on the battlefield and in need of protection.

For more information on the Summoner, get **Prima Publishing's** official Final Fantasy Tactics strategy guide.

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Ninja

Requirements: Archer Level Three;
Thief Level Four; Geomancer Level Two
Weapons: Knife, Ninja Sword, Hammer
Helmet: Hat
Armor: Clothes

Pro: High speed and movement ratings along with double weapon attacks make this character a powerhouse on the battlefield!

Con: Low HP totals put the character at risk on the front line.

For more information on the Ninja, get **Prima Publishing's** official Final Fantasy Tactics strategy guide.

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SQUARESOFT PlayStation

Lancer

Requirements: Thief Level Three
Weapons: Spear, Shield
Helmet: Helmet
Armor: Armor, Robe

Pro: This class's use of Heavy Armor and midranged Spear make it a nice alternative to the Knight class.

Con: When planning a jump attack you have no access to the amount of time it will take to activate.

For more information on the Lancer, get **Prima Publishing's** official Final Fantasy Tactics strategy guide.

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SQUARESOFT PlayStation

Red Chocobo

Class A Red Chocobo

| Move | Jump | C-EV |
|------|------|------|
| 6 | 5 | 10% |

| Attacks | R/S/M | When Poached |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| Choco Attack | Counter | Remedy |
| Choco Ball | Walk in Water | Barette |
| Choco Meteor | Ignore Heights | |

For more information on the Red Chocobo, get **Prima Publishing's** official Final Fantasy Tactics strategy guide.

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SQUARESOFT PlayStation

Knight

Requirements: Squire Level Two
Weapons: Sword, Knight Sword, Shield
Helmet: Helmet
Armor: Armor, Robe

Pro: The Knight's Battle Skills ability works with both long- and short range weapons and is great for disabling powerful enemies.

Con: You can disarm Break attacks using the Maintenance support skill.

For more information on the Knight, get **Prima Publishing's** official Final Fantasy Tactics strategy guide.

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SQUARESOFT PlayStation

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Electronic Arts 1-2 Racing 75 March 1998

Web Address: www.ea.com

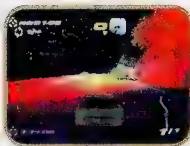
Need For Speed III

The Best NFS Yet?

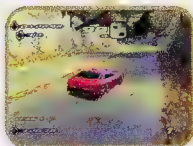
Need for Speed III is a game searching for an identity. We can't make any definitive judgments yet (it's still early, ya know). So far, it looks like NFS III is borrowing several of NFS II's elements, such as the general look of the cars as well as a similar frame rate. This edition, however, has wider tracks, better scenery and smarter opponents. Think of it as Porsche Challenge meeting the original Need for Speed—not a bad combination.

Eight new licensed cars include: Ferri 550 and 355 F1, BMW Nazca C2, Lamborghini Diablo SV and Countach, Jaguar XJR-15 with others to be revealed later. Add in some really annoying cops and a bunch of Sunday drivers and you have the recipe for destruction.

Driving modes include: Pursuit (insane road battles with the cops), Single Race, Two-player and Practice (with ghost car). The 10 tracks can be raced backward, forward or mirrored. The game also has variable



Night driving is intense, having nothing but your headlights and the occasional police cherries to light your way.



Leafy roadways make for slippery driving.



weather and night driving (with a wicked set of high-beams lighting the path). Shortcuts can be accessed later in the expert levels.

The wider tracks and improved gameplay make NFS III very much arcade-action oriented, shedding much of the sim qualities of the original. But this third installment definitely improves on NFS II's lackluster appearance and gameplay. It's not a sure bet that the game will conquer mediocrity, but at this point it looks like NFS III is a step in the right direction.

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

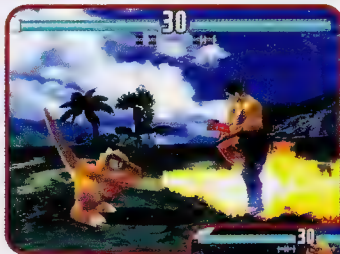
Web Address:

Tekken 3

If you're wondering what exactly is going to make the PlayStation version of Tekken 3 different from the arcade version, then this update is for you. Last issue we gave you the general info on the arcade hit. This time around, we're giving you a look at this new, PlayStation exclusive character.

The little dino in the pics is a popular Japanese comic book personality named Gon. This small fry may not look like much, but as you might guess, he packs quite a punch. Looking at the screenshots, you can see he's kicking the living crap out of Jin.

Chances are, the arcade secret characters will be included in the home version, but we'll have to wait and see if Namco will put in more PS-exclusive fighters. Keep an eye out for future EGMs for more updates.



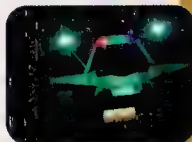
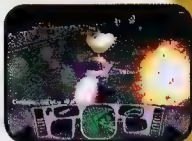
Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Web Address:

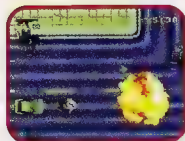
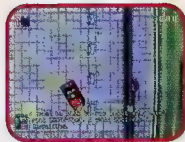
Crime Killer

A few issues back (*EGM* #101) we gave you an early look at a title coming from Interplay called *Crime Killer*. At that time it wasn't playable, so all we worked off of were a few screenshots. Now we have a nearly complete version in our hands which we've been able to run through pretty thoroughly.

This updated version of *Crime Killer* features a speedy frame rate and hi-res graphics. It also has all the vehicles working, including the car, motorbike and jet. So far, the missions have you running through various parts of a city taking down, following or racing bad guys. While making your way through the streets and tunnels of the city, look out for civilians as you try your best to blow away the enemy. If you're not careful, an ill-placed rocket will turn that evening commuter into a char grilled delight! Also, expect to see some incredible rendered cinematics.



Grand Theft Auto



Jump out of your vehicle and break out the machine guns and rocket launchers to really cause trouble.



Whether you want to call it creative license, a marketing ploy or bad taste, *Grand Theft Auto's* theme is sure to raise some eyebrows (and become the target of an annoying senator or two seeking attention).

Think of everything vile (cussing, senseless violence, blood, mayhem, cop killing, running over people) that can be blatantly thrown into a video game, and you'll get an idea of what to expect in *Grand Theft Auto*. You assume the identity of a newly hired henchman who works for a mobster with a bad attitude (don't they all?). Just like any hired gun, you're given your marching orders via public payphone. At first, they consist of menial tasks such as stealing cars. When your boss gains confidence in you (and you earn his trust), you'll be assigned more complex and important missions which consist of assassinations, car bomb runs and mass killings. Sometimes you'll even have to kill people so that your boss can win a bottle of tequila (he occasionally bets that you can kill a certain amount of people in eight minutes).

The battles takes place in large, 3-D cityscapes (three different ones in all) that are viewed through a bird's-eye perspective. How you navigate within this environment is up to you—but rest assured, there are plenty of ways for you to make the commute. Just about any type of vehicle can be commandeered (30 in all) ranging

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Interplay 1
Amazing Studio Action/Adventure N/A April 1998

Web Address: www.interplay.com

Heart of Darkness

The guys at Interplay describe *Heart of Darkness* as an interactive animated film with a *Toy Story*-esque look and feel.

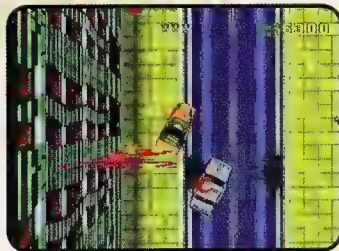
In this action-adventure game you play as Andy, a young boy with a vivid fear of the dark. The game tells the story of Andy's frightful descent into a dark and evil world where he must rescue his lost dog Whiskey. Players have nine levels of mazes, wild atmospheres and strange creatures to deal with on their way to conquering Andy's innermost fears in this animated wonder. Look for more on this game in the coming months.



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

ASC Games 1
DMA Design Action 80 April 1998

Web Address: www.ascgames.com



Knocking off a cop, and then stealing his car is one of the most satisfying accomplishments of the game.

from sports cars to school buses. It's as easy as walking in front of a car in traffic to make the cautious driver stop, at which point you yank him out the door so you can jump inside. You can even punch the driver, or just coldly run him or her over after-the-fact. Once you arrive at your destination, a large array of weapons (that include machine guns, flame-throwers and rocket launchers) allow you to turn the city streets into a bloody warzone.

Undoubtedly, *Grand Theft Auto* is the kind of game that is going to make consumer groups sweat. Regardless, we just hope that its gameplay is as entertaining as the controversy it will inevitably stir up. ●

38

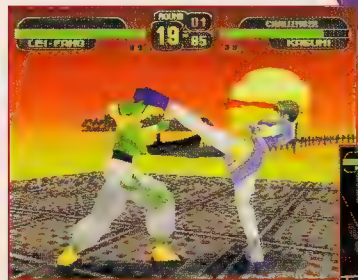
Reversals

24

Overhead grabs

36

Combination moves



You figure it out !



**COMING
FEBRUARY**

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See No Evil...



Hear No Evil...



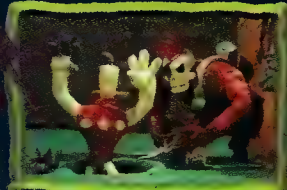
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—Game Informer



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Universal Int. 1-4 % Done March
Blue Shift Action/Racing 1998

Web Address: www.universal-interactive.com

Running Wild

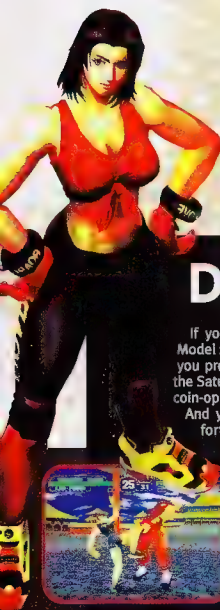
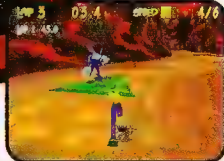
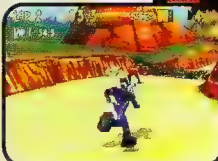
Chariots Of?

Running Wild combines the novelty of upright running animals and crazy obstacle-filled courses with classic cartoon elements to create one wacky racing game.

The contest features five animals: Braz the Zebra, Gwynne the Rabbit, Boris the Elephant, General the Ram, Coronado the Bull and Mei Ling the Panda. Each one has a signature running style not to mention certain other special attributes. The General (for example) uses his horns to bump others out of the way while Gwynne the Rabbit has the ability to leap over danger. The special abilities help, but simply running and winning a good race is the main object of the game.

Six courses take you through some interesting terrain including lava fields, frozen rivers, drainage tunnels and city streets. A variety of power-ups give you speed bursts, size increases, invulnerability and the ability to fly. Attaining top speed is done by avoiding contact with walls and other players so that your power meter stays full.

What it all boils down to is running fast, avoiding obstacles and hitting all the power-ups you can. A very simple and original new game. ●



Dead or Alive

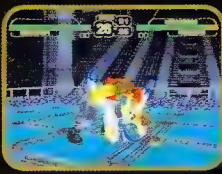
If you know anything about Tecmo's Model 2 arcade game Dead or Alive, then you probably don't care very much that the Saturn version played better than the coin-op and packed an extra character.

And you probably don't care that the forthcoming PlayStation version adds two new fighters, more moves, a higher polygonal count, more skimpy alternate costumes and a brand-new soundtrack. All you probably want to know is if the female characters still, shall we say, jiggle when they wiggle.

Fear not. Dead or Alive's large selection of well-endowed femme fighters are rendered with the same trademark bounciness that made the arcade game famous. And if you'd get your minds out of the gutter for a second, you'll be happy to hear that Tecmo is making this the best version of Dead

or Alive yet. In fact, the development team—made mostly of the original crew that created the coin-op—has said the PlayStation version could almost be called Dead or Alive 2.

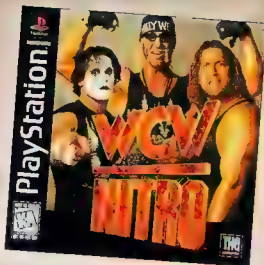
The game packs 11 characters (including Ryu Hayabusa, ninja star of the NES Ninja Gaiden series). It uses a three-button fighting engine similar to VF2, with a kick, punch and evade (instead of block) button. Although we haven't received a playable version yet (and therefore can't confirm whether the 3-D backgrounds of the arcade game made it into this version), the game is generating plenty of anticipation around the office. But does Dead or Alive have what it takes to topple Tekken 3? We'll see.



Yeah, it's pretty clear this game was made with a male audience in mind.



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| Publisher/Developer | Players/Genre | % Done | Release |
|---|-----------------|--------|---------------|
| SCEA Hudson | 1-2 Fighting | 70 | March 1998 |
| Web Address: www.playstation.com | | | |

Bloody Roar

Bloody Good Fun



Despite the game's high graphical detail, frame speed is impressive.

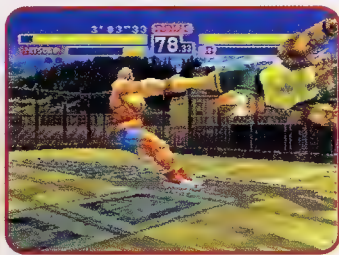


Remember when you had to buy a separate version of a game to get the fighting kids?

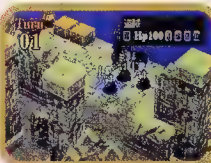
Bloody Roar stands to freshen up the fighting genre with its unique morphing fighters, intense speed and unorthodox fighting methods. Each player has a deep story line as well as the common trait of Zoanthropomorphism, allowing him/her to change into a beast counterpart at any time. Once in the more powerful Beast Mode, the Rave option can even further the aggression. Each player has 50 moves, not including combinations and multi-punch strings. On top of that, another tricky option lets you create your own combos and save them to a memory card. Some wrestling moves are also included for the friskier opponents.

Beyond the novelty of morphing, this game has a number of good and original things going for it. For example, you can select fighting k'ds as well as big-head fighters when you need a change of pace—no code needed here. For added destruction, another option lets players knock down walls and barriers, expanding the fighting area to new areas. Shut off the blood if you wish, though it isn't that disturbing...even for junior.

While the aesthetic elements are all impressive, gameplay is still the number-one priority in a fighting game and it's evident through early play testing that this title has a healthy dose of it. Keep an eye out for this one.



Some really cool non-traditional moves are available like this "swing-em-by-the-tail" maneuver.



Rebus

When Atlus set forth to create Rebus, their goal was to make (their words, not ours) an easy-to-use "Tactical-RPG" that is "a new concept which is easy to get into." In actuality, the game is very much like Konami's Vandal Hearts or even Atlus' own Tactics Ogre.

Rebus takes place in a 3-D world, and that perspective plays a large role in strategic decisions since terrain is so vital in your conquests. Land masses may be in the way of your armies, forcing you to lower them with magic so that you may get to the territory beyond. Spells are acquired through the use of magic cards that work fine by themselves, or in

combinations. For example, players may acquire a "Fire" card, which lets them emit fire spells. If they also get a "Flame" card, they can put them together to create powerful Fire Flames, and so forth. The utilization of such magic is essential to complete the scenarios.

Each of the game's scenarios are divided into chapters, introduced by impressive FMV. These intros hint as to the goal of each mission by showing a certain object or picture of the objective, in addition to revealing more of Rebus' story (which revolves around two characters—a boy and a girl).

So far, Rebus appears to be on course to delivering a good strategy-RPG. It's still a long way from being completed, so it's too early to make an accurate, final judgement.



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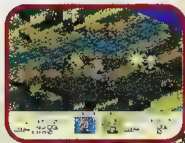
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Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Atlus
Atlus 1-2
Strategy/RPG 95 March
1998Web Address: www.atlusion.com

Tactics Ogre



The graphics are a bit disappointing when compared to the beautiful Final Fantasy Tactics.

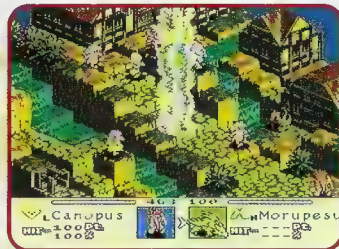
Like Ogre Battle before it, Tactics Ogre is making the jump from 16- to 32-Bit. In case you're not familiar with the game, Tactics Ogre is a 3-D tactical turn-based strategy, similar to Vandal Hearts or Final Fantasy Tactics. We're previewing the game again to show you updated screenshots of the almost-finished product and to tell you why the game's been delayed.

The game could've been put in stores a little earlier in the year. Atlus purposely delayed Tactics Ogre until after Final Fantasy Tactics' release. They knew if Squaresoft's high-profile title came out second, it would pretty much stop any further sales of Tactics Ogre. Atlus also hopes that Final Fantasy Tactics will introduce many new fans to the genre. This way, new fans who are looking for more (after beating FFT) can turn to Tactics Ogre. Make sure to check out this month's Review Crew (where we rate Final Fantasy Tactics) and next month's (where we should be reviewing Tactics Ogre) to see how the two stack up to each other.

The opening cinema introduces you to a few of the characters and their statistics.



Octopus
The only large monster which can go in water.

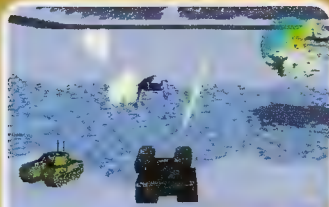


Special magical spells can turn the tide of the battle...hopefully in your favor.

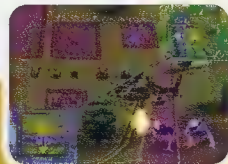
Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Web Address:

WarGames: Defcon 1



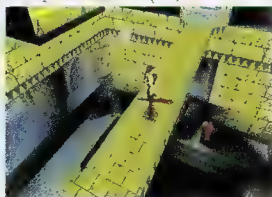
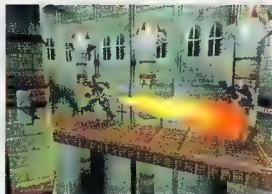
Battles take place in alpine, jungle, lowland, urban and desert environments among others.



We don't remember any of these things in the original WarGames. Perhaps Matthew Broderick is inside one of these vehicles. Hopefully he's in the one exploding.

There's only one thing
more torturous than playing
Deathtrap Dungeon.





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Not playing it.



www.deathtrapdungeon.com

your disposal. Or play the PC version and leave the other on line players crying for more. Because in these 10 cavernous levels of evil traps, it's all about blurring that fine line between pleasure and pain. And just when you think you can't take it any longer, consider the alternative.

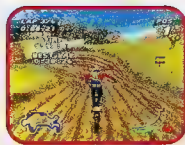
EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

You've been warned.

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Jeremy McGrath Supercross '98

Prepare To
Eat Some
Dirt



Look out for objects in the environment that do damage.



It's official. Motocross guru Jeremy McGrath will lend his name and influence to the newest entry in the growing motocross genre—Supercross '98.

In Supercross '98 you will compete for points and money in the Championship series, upgrading bikes as the winnings allow (sorry, no licensed bikes here). Time Trials are also mandatory, complete with best-time ghost riders as well as two-player split-screen competition. Several 125 and 250cc bikes will be available and are ranked on their power and handling abilities. Play as Jeremy or create your own bike and persona as well as custom tracks—up to 30 on one memory card. The game is also compatible with the analog pad for precise control on the twisting, variable weather courses.

OK, enough with the stats. Early play testing revealed great graphic detail and killer animations in this game. The bikes and riders look in scale to each other and to the backgrounds (something other motocross games have goofed on). Attention to form 's also evident in the little details: variable exhaust smoke, dirt rooster-tails and best of all—good rider an'mat'on all add to the realism of the game. You'll notice their bodies reacting to jump landings, wheelies, corner turning and 360s, all alleviating the stiff look nicely. Wreck animations are looking good with riders flying off the bikes in several body-crushing ways depending on how hard they bail. Background and track detail are nice as well, w'th plenty of shading and light sourcing to emphasize the realistic look.

Most encouraging is the game's performance when the traffic gets thick. Very little slowdown occurs in one-player and it's actually easy to keep an eye on your bike in the stew of riders.

Although there are only a few other motocross games out there, Supercross '98 seems poised to take the h.o.e. shot when it is released this summer.

All seems calm while exploring these dungeons until an enemy appears and the game turns into a fighter.



Electronic Arts
EA-Canada Action 70 March
1998
Web Address: www.ea.com

ReBoot



Under development for roughly two years, ReBoot is a sci-fi action game that borrows heavily from its TV brother of the same name.

You play as Bob, the game's protagonist. Your environment is the innards of a vast mainframe computer in which an evil robot named Megabyte is attempting to seize control of by using his viral army. Megabyte has planted "Tears" (bombs) within the mainframe that will eventually explode if left alone. You must seek out and defuse these

virus-laden bad boys before they go boom, ruining you and the computer.

The large 3-D play areas are covered with streets, buildings and polygonal structures. As you explore the regions you will also need to take down enemy hovercraft, gun turrets and the occasional sea slug. Sounds easy but when you realize you have a time limitation, it gets a lot harder. Half the fun of playing this game is learning how to maneuver the hovering zipboard around the various terrain and obstacles in a smooth and efficient manner. Certain areas actually resemble skate parks, complete with bowls, half-pipes and giant ramps. Part sci-fi shooter, part skateboard challenge is one way to describe this unique 3-D game. With over 18 levels and 30 enemies (not to mention an inspiring spy thriller soundtrack), ReBoot could be one of the more creative and quirky titles of the year.



ReBoot shows off some neat special effects and smooth graphics.



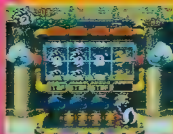
One Wicked Weasel!



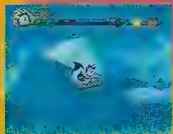
Over 30 huge levels with multiple paths and hidden secrets!
Think you've played it all?
Think again!

Roll it, park it... in the air, on land and underground. In the water too!
Thrust, skate, dig, glide, and jump your way to rescue mice!
(Filled with the classic 2D action that everyone's been talking about!)

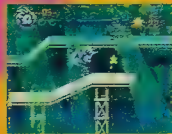
Viva Las Punky



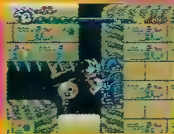
Gettin' Vertical



Aggressive Moves!



Tomb Wader



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Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release
Square 1 65 March 1998
Web Address: www.playstation.com

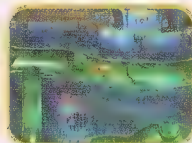
SaGa Frontier

With Final Fantasy Tactics just arriving in stores this month, Sony is already preparing to unleash Square's next big RPG, the latest entry in the long-running SaGa series (which, aside from the Game Boy titles which were brought over as the Final Fantasy Legend series, have never been ported from Japan), SaGa Frontier.

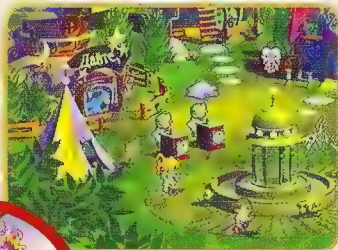
In SaGa Frontier, you get to play through seven different quests, each starting a different character (which you choose at the outset) with his/her/its own diverse story line. For example, Emelia is a girl who's been accused of murdering her boyfriend, and begins in a prison with a narrow chance of escape. Red is a boy who witnesses his father's abduction from an evil syndicate known as "Black X," only to be granted the powers of a superhero from an outcast from a foreign land of heroes. This is just a twinkling of the several huge stories that unfold, and each is quite different from the next. What's more, the game allows you to play through all seven on the same Memory Card file, meaning there's a chance that stories may intertwine later on (we haven't played far enough to find out yet this literally came in at the very last minute).

Expect a review soon (possibly next month), as the game is due to be released on or around March 24. ●

Each of the seven characters in SaGa Frontier has their own completely separate story.



Emelia's story starts out in a dank prison, where she's being held for allegedly killing her boyfriend.



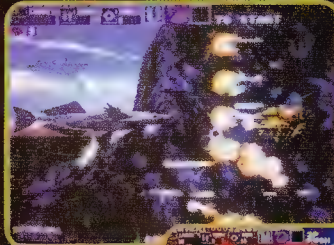
Like Final Fantasy VII, backgrounds are prerendered, but the characters are sprite-based, rather than polygonal.



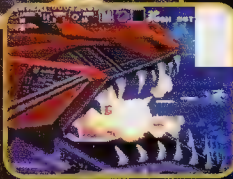
Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release
Taiko 1-2 N/A Spring 1998
Taiko Shooting Japan

Web Address: www.taiko.co.jp

G-Darius



The graphics on the PC version seem good—hopefully they will be on the PS version too.



Taiko recently announced plans to bring their intense 3-D arcade shooter, G-Darius (ver. 2, the most recent release), home to the PlayStation. G-Darius is the latest sequel in the long-running Darius series of shooters, and is now for the first time completely comprised of polygons for a slick three-dimensional look and feel.

The biggest new feature in G-Darius is the ability to use Capture Balls (the bombs that sucked in enemies. If you've played Darius Golden on the Saturn or in the arcade) to suck in enemies and have them fight alongside you during play. If you need to get out of a tight spot, you can detonate the captured enemy, creating an explosion that wipes out anything it touches (except you, of course). Two-

player simultaneous play is supported in the arcade version, and will most likely be supported in the PS version as well (though we couldn't confirm 100 percent at press time).

G-Darius is a graphical wonder, containing some of the best twitch shooting to come our way in a while. Hopefully a wise U.S. publisher will hop on this one ASAP. It's due out in Japan this spring.

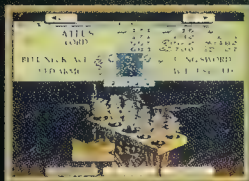
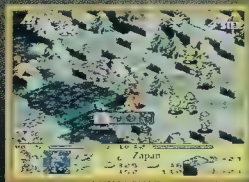


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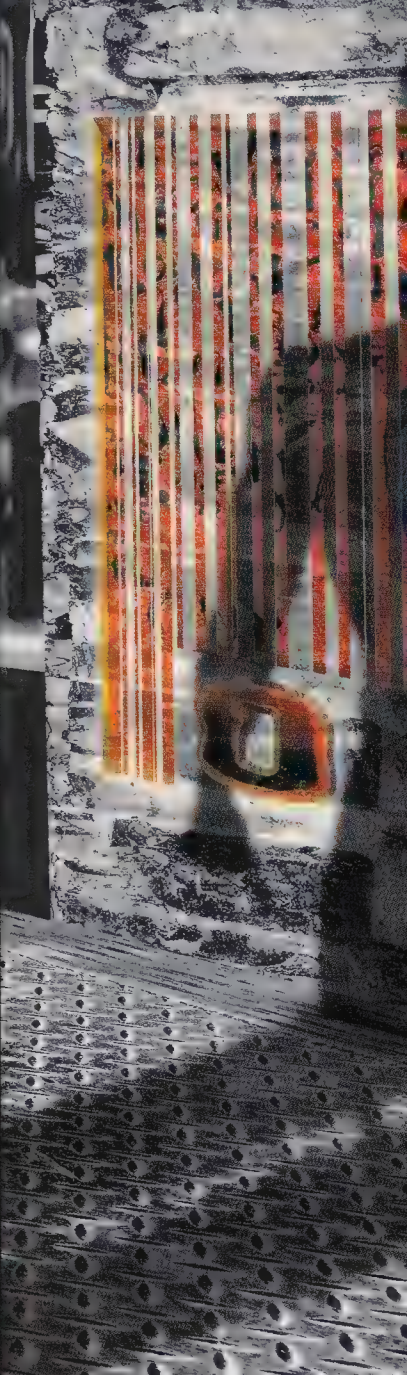
"Levels which are virtually infinite in size."
-Official PlayStation Magazine

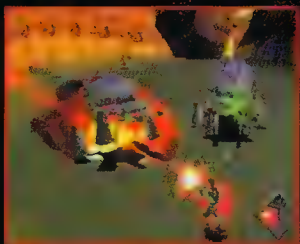
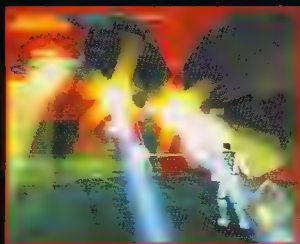
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Arcade

PREVIEWS

Game Directory

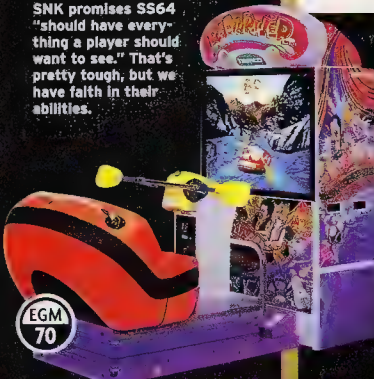
- Marvel vs. Capcom
- Rapid River

That time of year...

It's almost time for the arcade shows again. ATEI (the big coin-op show in England) is happening as you're reading this. Big news from the floor of this show is Namco's unveiling of System 23 and Time Crisis 2. All previous simulation games (Air Combat 22, Tokyo Wars, Final Furlong, etc.) were on System 22. Not much is known about System 23, except it will have more polygons and lighting effects (basically, more of what you like).

After ATEI, it's back to the U.S. for ASI (one of the two big arcade shows in the U.S., the other being AMOA). It's still too early to speculate what will be there, but Capcom's Rival Schools (a 3-D polygonal type game that has gotten HUGE reviews) should be there. Sega is sure to have their Motor Raid and Model 3 water skiing games.

SNK is almost ready to push out Neo 64 and Road's Edge as well as a newly revamped Samurai 64. Our man at SNK promises SS64 "should have everything a player should want to see." That's pretty tough, but we have faith in their abilities.

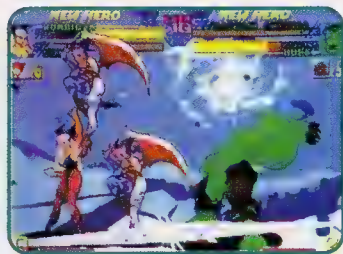


The Latest In Cloning Technology

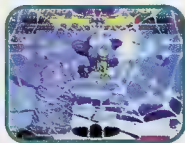
Marvel vs. Capcom: Clash of Superheroes

The latest (and last?) in a long line of Street Fighter clones will be hitting arcades soon. If not for the 14 that came before it, this game would straight out rule. The fact is, you know the drill: a two-player fighting game in the style of X-Men (or X-Men Vs. SF or Marvel Vs. SF) with 36 characters (of which only 15 are playable). Some characters are from Marvel Comics and some have been seen in previous games: Captain America, Wolverine, War Machine, Incredible Hulk, Gambit and Venom. What makes this game cool is the fact that the "Capcom" side of the game features characters not seen in this type of game before: Strider, Mega Man, Captain Commando, Marvel vs. Capcom also has a classic group of fighters: Ryu, Chun-Li, Zangief, Morrigan and Jin from Cyberbots. These are just the straight-out playable characters in the game. The gameplay is similar to previous titles

as well, with a couple changes. One addition is a cooperative



attack that allows you to control both of your characters at once. In the previous games, you picked a tag team, where you would play as one character while the other is recharging. For Marvel Vs. Capcom, you still get a tag team, but you choose a special partner as well. This character isn't playable and can only be called upon for help. The roster of these special partners includes extra Marvel characters such as Thor, Magneto, Rogue and Jubilee as well as more cool Capcom characters like Arthur from Ghouls and Ghosts.



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Namco Namco 1-2 Simulation 100 New

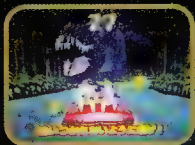
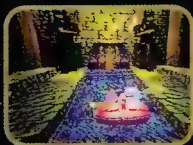
Web Address: www.namco.com

Rapid River

The "RR adventure" can be played with one or two players. The goal is to reach the end of one of the three different routes. A multibranching course provides different routes for depth and variety.

Each branch is themed differently. The Grand Canyon is a fast-paced white-water river, where players must quickly maneuver around boulders to

avoid being crushed. There is a jungle in the Jurassic Period branch where players drift by dinosaurs of all kinds. Rapid River is on a motherboard roughly referred to as System 22.5 with some



Fighters Destiny

Fighters Destiny will take everything you have, and throw it right back at you. This brawler, which Next Generation Online calls "The best playing 3D fighter for N64" will challenge your skills with its Point-based contests. This point system allows you to come from behind, and win - if you can throw the right combo.

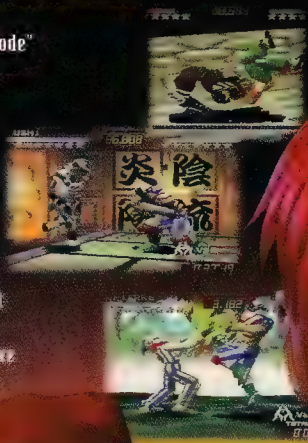
Learn moves in the "Training Mode" and perfect your skills for the 4 other fighting modes. These include: Vs. Computer, Vs. Battle (two player), Record Attack and Master Challenge.

Fighters Destiny includes 10 Fighters, plus special hidden characters and masters. Find out why N64.com raves "Smooth graphics, fast gameplay and more options than any other fighting game for the N64."

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(and rental outlet) near you



FACE YOUR FATE



Your Destiny Awaits!



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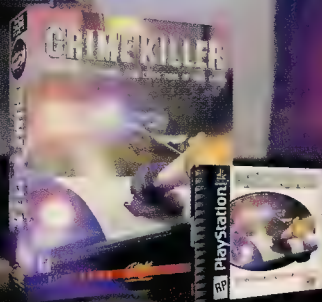
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"SOMEBODY
PINCH ME,
I THINK I'M
IN HEAVEN."

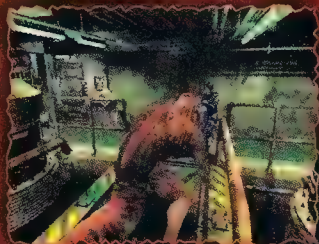
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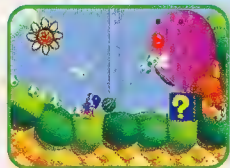
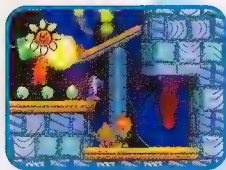
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YOSHI'S

By John Ricciardi

Yoshi Strikes Back

Maybe it was the undeniable dino charm. Maybe it was the insatiable appetite that put fellow foe eater Kirby to shame. Or maybe it was the status of being Mario's newest best buddy. Whatever the reason, gamers took an immediate liking to Yoshi and his multicolored kin when Super Mario World hatched him into the pantheon of classic game characters.

And in 1995, when Nintendo released Yoshi's Island, the tongue flicking former sidekick suddenly became the star of one of the coolest, most challenging and most original platform games of all time. Marking the 10th anniversary of the original Super Mario Bros., and billed as the sequel to Super Mario World (although it wasn't a sequel in Japan), the Super FX-based Yoshi's Island stunned all with its huge worlds, astonishing depth of play and incredibly rich graphics. Now, three years later, Nintendo intends on blowing us all away once again with the long-awaited sequel to Yoshi's Island, Yoshi's Story. But can the big N possibly top what has been hailed by many as the greatest platform game ever made? Read on...



The Story Behind the Story

Yoshi's Story stars six baby Yoshis who set out on a quest through a living picture book that was once their homeland, Yoshi's Island. It seems Baby Bowser has stolen the Super Happy Tree from the island, taking away any and all happiness from the Yoshis that live there. To make matters worse, the fire-breathing little brat turned the whole island into a picture book filled with strange enemies, traps and puzzles. While 99.9 percent of the Yoshi population may have been thrust into a deep depression because of the theft of their "Happy Tree" (and you thought YOU had problems), there's still hope. Somewhere on the island, six Yoshis are about to hatch who have no knowledge of the Super Happy Tree, and therefore will be born immune to the curse Baby Bowser has laid upon the land. These babies are the six Yoshis you control. They're the keys to giving Baby Bowser the spanking he deserves and bringing happiness (and normality) back to Yoshi's Island. And these Yoshis have one less thing to worry about, too — this time Baby Mario is nowhere to be found.



STORY™

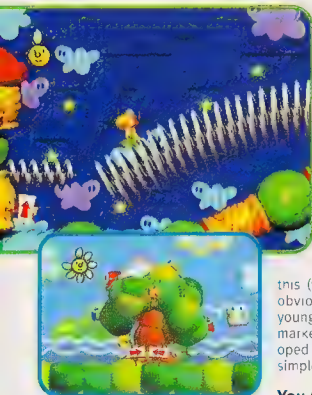
Yoshi's Short Story?

Yoshi's Story contains six worlds to explore, each composed of four areas for a total of 24 stages. Each world in the Story Mode (or Page, as each world is referred to as) has a different theme (for example, Page 2 is mostly underground caverns, while Page 5 takes place in the jungle), and each of the 24 stages has its own artistic uniqueness. The graphics are simply incredible (easily the best 2-D stuff we've ever seen), and the 60 fps animation is smooth as, well, a baby Yoshi's bottom. There's a nice variety of music too, although some of the Yoshis' neocache-inducing singing (more like whining) between stages can get on your nerves.



That's the good news. The bad news is that, similar to Star Fox 64, it's impossible to play through every stage in one sitting of Yoshi's Story. In Star Fox that isn't so bad because there's a lot of variety between the stages, and there are rewards for getting Medals

A Rainbow of Yoshis



on each stage. In Yoshi, you can only play through six stages in any one sitting, and there's (apparently) no reward for getting high scores during play, leaving gameplay to an uninspiring hour or two each time before seeing the ending. Fans of the original Yoshi's Is. and will surely be disappointed by this (we sure were), but it's quite obvious that Nintendo had a younger (or shall we say "broader") market in mind when they developed Yoshi's Story, leading to a simpler, but still enjoyable game.

You Gotta Have Heart(s)

When you first begin play in the Story Mode, you'll be at Page 1, where you can choose any one of the four Page 1 stages. Each stage contains three "Special Hearts" that are well hidden and necessary for opening later stages. If you complete a stage in Page 1 without finding any Special Hearts, you'll only have 2-1 to choose from when you reach Page 2. But depending on how many Special Hearts you find, that many more stages will be open upon reaching Page 2. So if you find all three Special Hearts, for example, every Page 2 stage will be selectable when you arrive (2-1, 2-2, 2-3 and 2-4). Again, you'll only be able to choose ONE of them to play each time, but this is now your progress through the game.

Once you complete a stage, it'll change from Blue to Red on the Map Screen the next time you play, letting you know that you've already cleared that stage. Then, it becomes permanently selectable in the Trial Mode, where you can pick any stage of the game that you've already finished for practice purposes (and to try to top your High Score).

Frut Pursuit

Clearing a stage is simple—merely find and consume 30 fruits. Fruits are hidden all over each stage, and the ones you've already eaten will be displayed in the configurable border that surrounds the playfield (you can hide it completely, or move it in and out of the screen as you wish). Gone are the Super NES original's multiple objectives of each stage, which needed to be completed in order to get perfect scores and open up hidden levels. Now you just find 30 fruits and that's

Yoshi's Story The First Time

These screens are from the video shown at the 1996 Space World show in Japan when Yoshi was displayed for the first time. What happened? Did this world just disappear? Was it merely to show off the game engine? Or is it still hidden somewhere in the game? We may never know, but as it stands now—we haven't found this (or some of the other areas shown on tape) anywhere in the game's 24 stages.

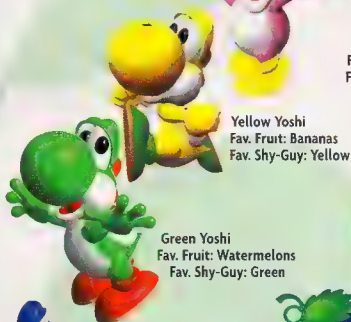


Pink Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Apples
Fav. Shy-Guy: Red



Red Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Apples
Fav. Shy-Guy: Red

Yellow Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Bananas
Fav. Shy-Guy: Yellow



Green Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Watermelons
Fav. Shy-Guy: Green



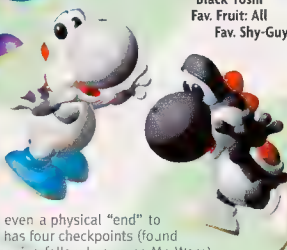
Blue Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Grapes
Fav. Shy-Guy: Blue



Light Blue Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Grapes
Fav. Shy-Guy: Blue

Black Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: All
Fav. Shy-Guy: All

White Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: All
Fav. Shy-Guy: All



it. In fact, there's not even a physical "end" to any stage. Each stage has four checkpoints (found by the rotund little sleeping fellow known as Mr. Warp), and once you've reached the fourth one, you'll usually find some kind of jar or other means of transportation that'll take you back to the beginning of the stage to continue your search. You can warp to and from any of the four Mr. Warps at any time by simply jumping on their heads.

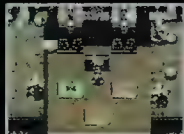
Sounds too simple, doesn't it? Well, there's a catch—sort of. In order to get a really high score, you'll want to collect ONLY Honeydew Meirons (the fruit of choice for today's distinguished, health-conscious Yoshi). Since there are ONLY 30 Honeydew Meirons on each stage, and some of them are VERY well hidden (using the R button to have Yoshi



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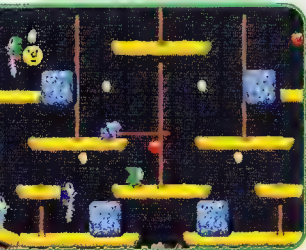
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sniff for clues is a must), this will make exploration a lot tougher and more time consuming. The problem with all this? SO FAR (we're not ruling anything out—yet!) there doesn't seem to be any payoff to doing this other than obtaining higher scores. The original Yoshi at least provided some super challenging extra stages and special bonus rounds that were only available once you got perfect scores on every stage. There's also a different "Lucky Fruit" every time you play that you select before beginning that is worth more points than the other fruits, but if you're after the Honeydew Melons, the Lucky Fruit really doesn't make a difference. And finally, if you collect six of any one fruit in a row, you'll get a special Heart Fruit that will make Yoshi temporarily invincible, with an unlimited amount of eggs and a tongue that's nearly double its normal length.

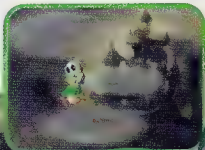
All About Yoshi

You can choose from six Yoshis in Yoshi's Story, not including the two hidden Yoshis (Black and White) that have to be found during the game and rescued by completing the stage with their respective eggs intact. Controlling Yoshi is a cinch, thanks to the N64's Analog Control Stick (this is a first for a 2-D game). Yoshi controls much like he did in Yoshi's Island,



although certain control elements have been dumbed down a bit (which in effect, dumbs down some of the gameplay, unfortunately). Yoshi can still run, duck, jump and "Pound the Ground" like he used to (which gives off a pretty strong shock if you've got a Rumble Pak inserted, by the way). Pressing the A button after jumping will still make Yoshi hover for a bit before landing. And, of course, you can still hurt eggs as your main means of offense, this time by using

the Z Trigger to move the target anywhere on the screen before releasing the egg. If you lose a Yoshi, the only way to get him back is to find one of the elusive White Shy-Guys hidden throughout the game, who will then show up on the Select Screen before the next stage where you can choose him instead of a Yoshi (he'll fly to the castle and bring back one of your lost Yoshis).



screen if you can't reach a certain item or enemy. On the other hand, eggs do leave behind a small starry cloud when they're destroyed (for a split second) which can be used to strategically take out certain enemies (especially Bosses) of which, by the way, there are only five in the entire game. And secondly, Yoshi no longer has the choice to create eggs or spit out enemies when he consumes them. Now, all enemies are turned into eggs instantly.

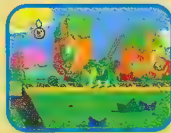
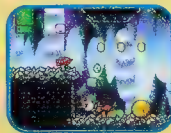
In addition, Yoshi no longer has the ability to morph into other objects (like the chopper and the sub from the original). Fortunately he CAN swim now, and there are some other cool modes of transportation, like giant springs that send Yoshi sky-high, special rail lifts that change direction each time you jump on their backs, propeller-based platforms that sway from side to side as Yoshi's weight shifts, feathers that blow in the wind and more.

Closing the Book

Yoshi's Story is a fantastic game for what it was meant to be—an easy to get into, visually appealing game geared toward children. So far it appears that if you were a big fan of the original, chances are high you're going to come away disappointed with the sequel. Still, it's an extremely playable game, and with the slight changes Nintendo is making to the final U.S. release (like moving certain items around and altering the Save feature a bit), there's a twinkling of hope that it'll still meet our high expectations.

Yoshi's Island Vs. Yoshi's Story

Soon the Review Crew will be taking on the final U.S. version of Yoshi's Story. For now, take a look at some interesting numbers we put together...



Yoshi's Island

Yoshi's Story

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cartridge Size: | 16 Megabits | 128 Megabits |
| # of Stages: | 54 (60 with Mini-Game Areas) | 24 (25 with Practice Stage) |
| # of Bosses: | 12 | 5 |

Three years later, with eight times as much cartridge space to play with, there's less than half as many stages as the first runaround. Needless to say, this is disappointing.



Sports

The National News

Section B

February 3, 1998

A GLANCE



Page 2B

FEATURES

- Real players and player attributes
- Medals, ceremonies and Olympic-size rink give you the ultimate Olympic experience
- Set and save your Olympic records
- Create your own player, put yourself on a team and lead them to glory

Page 3B

World Peace Treaty Signed

All Global Rivalries Put Off Until '98

Nagano Olympic Hockey Tournament

For the first time in history, NHLPA™ pros are descending upon the Olympic Winter Games. Be a witness as former teammates go head to head. Kamensky and Yashin are headed for Russia. Kariya and Roy will be playing for Canada. Modano and Leetch are in for the United States. The rosters are real. The graphics will make you sweat. It's country against country in this engagement. And the price of glory isn't gonna be pretty.

Please see Hockey on Page 2B.



MIDWAY
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Page 3B

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THE GALAXY IS FAR, FAR AWAY.
THE FIGHTING IS
UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL.



Editors' Choice Awards

It's not tough being an *EGM* editor. We get to play every video game that gets made, day in and day out. What is tough, however, is trying to decide what games are the best in any given year. Out of the hundreds of games we saw in 1997, we have to pick and choose who we're going to recognize with a coveted *EGM* award. It's truly a privilege and a pleasure to call up a game company and tell them that because their product is so awesome, we're going to send them a trophy (which

they'll get to display in the lobby of their main headquarters). But it's even more fun just being able to tell the whole world what we thought were the best games of last year.

So here are the 1997 *EGM* Editors' Choice Awards (followed by the 1997 Readers' Choice Awards). Don't forget, only games that were released sometime in 1997 (from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31) are eligible for nomination. That's why you won't see certain games like *S.T.I.K.O.C.E.N.* or *Virtua Cop 2* here (they were both released at the very end of 1996).

All Systems



GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

It took a team of creative programmers (Rare) and the desire to break out of traditional molds (Doom clones) to bring us the game that was voted 1997's Game of the Year. *GoldenEye 007* is a runaway hit with the *EGM* editors. The fast-paced espionage action combined with gorgeous

graphics and a killer soundtrack gives players everything they'd ever want in a James Bond video game. But the excellent one-player game is only the half of it. *GoldenEye 007* also boasts one of the most frantic, most addicting multiplayer games ever. When we were all finished with the single-player missions, we could still be found deathmarching until the wee hours of the morning. Whether you're talking about *GoldenEye 007* one player or four, you have one of the best action games of all time, period. If you have a Nintendo 64 (or are looking for a reason to buy one), look no further for that killer game that puts all others to shame. This is the single best game of 1997, hands down.

RUNNERS-UP

Castlevania: SotN - PlayStation
Final Fantasy VII - PlayStation

Nintendo 64



GOLDENEYE 007

Although Nintendo 64 software this past year was few and far between, you couldn't deny that the quality was there. Hits like Mario Kart 64 and Star Fox 64 kept hungry N64 owners going. But it was GoldenEye 007 that stole the show. This relatively low-budget game started out as another first-person shooter in the masses, and ended up being one of the best games we've ever seen in our lives. It was a pleasant surprise, to say the least.

RUNNERS-UP

International Superstar Soccer 64

Saturn



SATURN BOMBERMAN

Only a Bomberman game can get away with winning a Game of the Year award based solely on its multiplayer aspect. Saturn Bomberman is simply the finest edition of the long-running series. This version has a few new features, but they are all overshadowed by perhaps the most important one: allowing up to 16 players to battle at one time. We all love party-type multiplayer games, but how much cooler can playing Bomberman with nine other people be?

RUNNERS-UP

Street Fighter Collection
Madden NFL 98

PlayStation



CASTLEVANIA: SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT

You can dazzle us with fancy 3-D graphics, and you can tantalize us with beautiful full-motion video, but in the end, it's gameplay that rules. Castlevania: Symphony of the Night

takes us back to our roots. It's a traditional 2-D side-scroller that has more depth than 99 percent of today's games. The sheer size of this game and classic style of play has hooked many EGM editors for countless hours. If you miss the yesteryears of video gaming, don't pass up the chance to play this latest instalment of the long-running and highly acclaimed Castlevania series.

RUNNERS-UP

Final Fantasy VII
Colony Wars

Arcade



NFL BLITZ

It's been done for hockey, and it's been done for basketball. It's about time someone did an NBA, am-style no-holds-barred pigskin game. NFL Blitz has everything you'd want in a football arcade game: no timeouts, no penalties, easy play selection, sharp graphics, big plays and necessary roughness. This is the simple and catchy type of game that draws both football and non-football fans alike.

RUNNERS-UP

Tekken 3
The Lost World: Jurassic Park



Action



GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

Are you sick of reading about GoldenEye 007 yet? Well, here's yet another award that it won by a comfortable margin. Although the competition in the Action category is pretty tough, no one can forget the best one of them all. Great graphics, realistic animation, tons of weapons, missions, secrets, etc., all place GoldenEye 007 on a level all its own. In case you haven't got the message yet, this is a must-play experience.

RUNNER-UP

Castlevania: SotN - PS

Sports



INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER 64 - N64

It seems like just about every soccer video game has at least one big weakness. This can't be said about Konami's ISS 64, a

soccer game that deftly combines realism with great gameplay. Such an impressive feat can be overlooked because of ISS 64's fluently animated 3-D player graphics that are second-to-none. Rarely does a sports game excel in so many different ways like this one.

RUNNERS-UP

Madden NFL 98 - PS, Saturn
NFL GameDay '98 - PS

Fighting



STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION - PS, SAT

Perhaps the most over-populated genre, fighting games seem a dime-a-dozen these days. They can go 3-D and become more realistic, but one thing's for certain: Street Fighter is still king of the hill. Most of the EGM staff would gladly give up all the other fighting games in the world to keep any one from the SF series. With SF Collection, we get three excellent titles, giving us enough Street Fighter to keep us happy for a long time to come. These may be the best 2-D fighting games we'll ever see in our short lifetimes.

RUNNERS-UP

Street Fighter EX Plus α - PS
Soul Blade - PS

Racing



DIDDY KONG RACING - N64

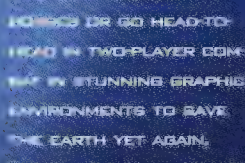
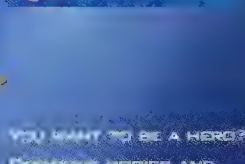
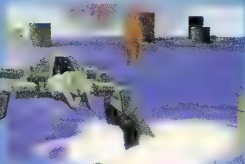
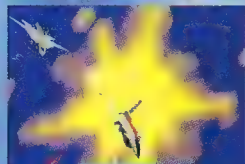
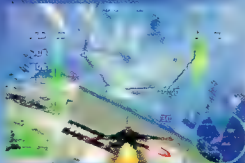
Diddy Kong Racing proves that improving on a successful formula (Mario Kart 64) can pay off big time. DKR takes the Mario Kart magic to new levels by including more than one vehicle to choose from and huge, rule-bending Bosses to race against. DKR also gives you a huge Adventure Mode, to ensure the one-player game is just as fun as the multiplayer game.

RUNNERS-UP

NASCAR 98 - PS, Saturn
Rage Racer - PS

"SAY HELLO TO MY LITTLE FRIENDS"

HERO FIGHTERS ASSAULT



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HEROES OR GO HEAD-TO-HEAD
IN TWO-PLAYER COMBAT IN
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Role-Playing



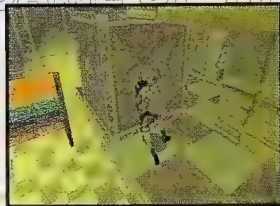
FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

The PlayStation finally made an impact on the RPG scene this past year, and did so almost all on the efforts of one monumental game: Final Fantasy VII. The anticipation for this game h't such feverish levels, that half the EGM staff imported, and completed, the game before the American version was even released. When the American version did finally come out, the other half of the staff got to see what all the well-observed duzz was about. Don't miss this RPG event of the past year.

RUNNERS-UP

Alundra - PS
Wild Arms - PS

Adventure



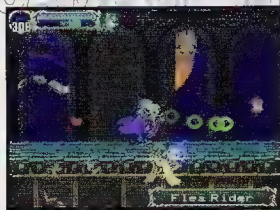
TOMB RAIDER II - PS

Behind all of the hype and anatomically impossible...uh...polygons, Tomb Raider II starring Lara Croft proves that it has what it takes to be a solid adventure game. Not only is the game huge, it presents challenge after challenge. In what other PlayStation game can you swim, snowmobile, jump from platform to platform (with deadly lava flowing underneath, no less) and avoid a countless number of traps, only to encounter a sword-wielding statue after that? Yes, Tomb Raider II is da bomb.

RUNNER-UP

Enemy Zero - Saturn

Side-Scrolling



CASTLEVANIA: SOTN - PS

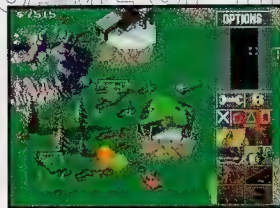
Traditional 2-D side-scrollers are rapidly becoming an endangered genre as technology ushers in more and more 3-D. Thankfully, a few do pop up once in a while

and take gamers back to the good ol' days of gaming. Castlevania: Symphony of the Night is one of those games. It is arguably one of the best games in the series, even though many liken the playing style more to Metro than to Castlevania. Nevertheless, it was an instant love affair between Symphony and the critical EGM staff. Everyone was hooked on the traditional style of game and found the great 2-D graphics to be a refreshing change of pace from all the 3-D eye candy we're so used to seeing these days.

RUNNER-UP

Mega Man X4 - PS, Saturn

Strategy



COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT - PS

Traditionally, console strategy games take a back seat to the more popular genres (namely, everything else), but that doesn't

mean that there aren't any good ones. This past year, we were treated to the best console realtime strategy game of all time. Command & Conquer: Red Alert has every thing going for it: a great interface, simple controls, death and destruction, fast and frantic strategy, a wide variety of miss ons and cool FMV to tie it all together.

RUNNERS-UP

WarCraft II - PS, Saturn
Vandal Hearts - PS

Shooter



STAR FOX 64 - N64

The original Star Fox was one of the best shooters (3-D or otherwise) of all time, and Star Fox 64 ranks right up alongside it. Multiple pathways, fantastic graphics and great replayability (getting all those Medals

on the Extra Mode sure ain't easy) all add up to one of the most enjoyable gaming experiences on the N64 to date. Add to that a ton of real voice (no more blip blip-dabba), very cool realtime cinematics and a fun Multiplayer Mode (though not as great as Mario Kart 64's or GoldenEye's), and you've got a game that no Nintendo 64 owner should be without.

RUNNER-UP

RayStorm - PS

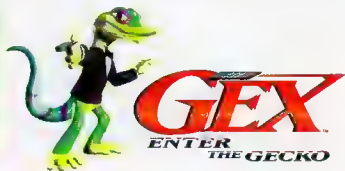
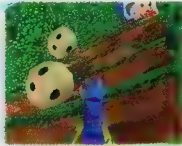
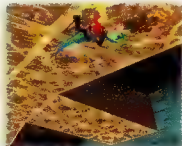
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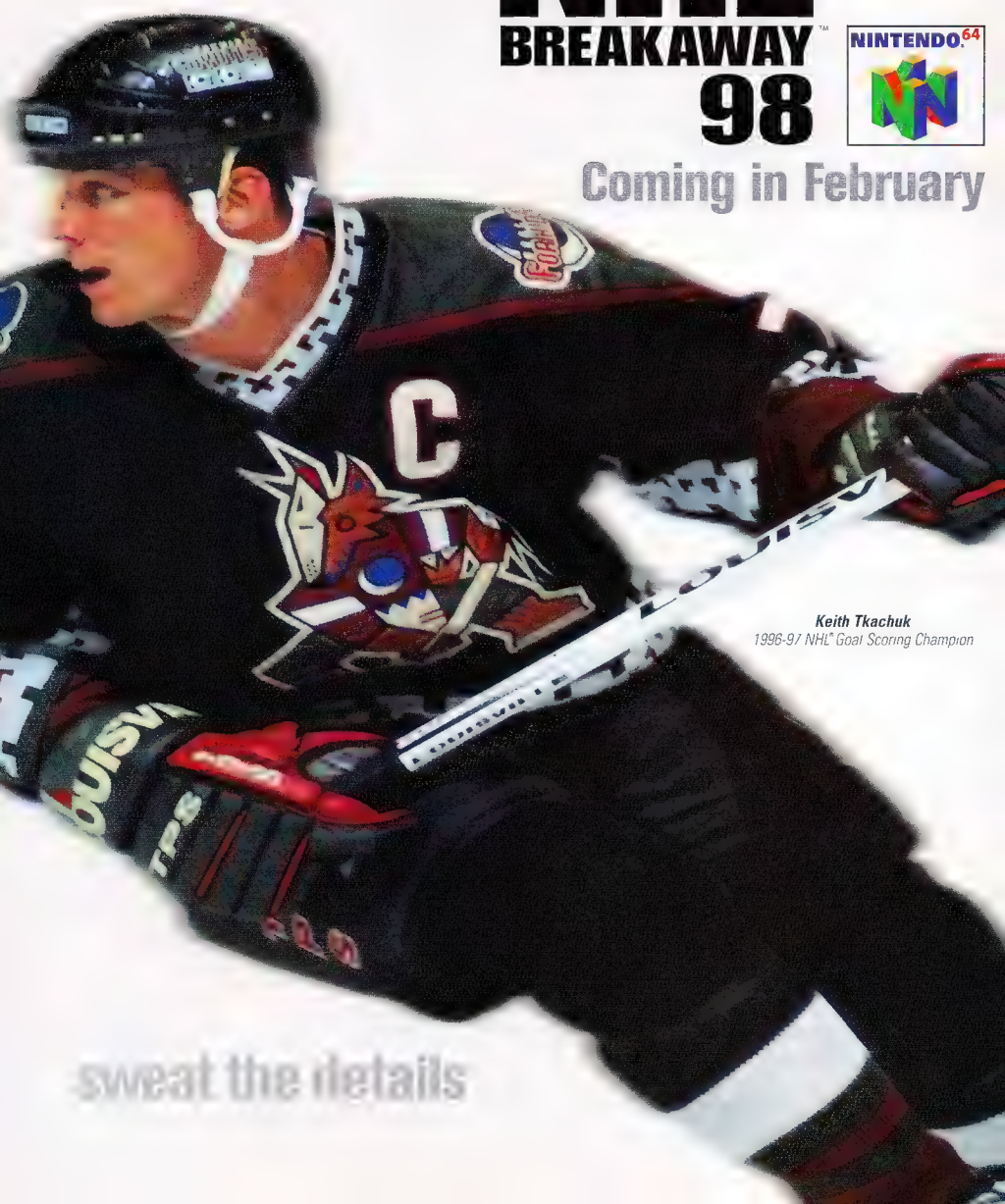
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Multiplayer



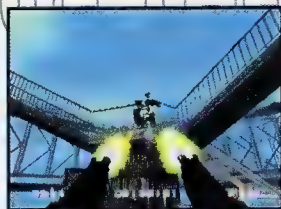
SATURN BOMBERMAN - SAT

This was a hotly contested category, but Saturn Bomberman has one advantage all the PlayStation and N64 nominees don't

Have 10-player capability. Saturn Bomberman is a great improvement over its predecessors—new features (like team play) are only part of the fun. But you haven't really played Bomberman until you've played with nine other people, all crowded around a (hopefully) big-screen TV. Plus, what better way to show off to your friends than to be declared a winner in a 10-way battle royale? Rub 't 'n while you can...it's not easy being the survivor of the fittest.

RUNNERS-UP
GoldenEye 007 - N64
Mario Kart 64 - N64

First-Person Shooter



GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

In a sea of copy-cat first-person shooters with little or no innovation, GoldenEye 007 stands out like a beacon in the night. While everyone else is rushing to make the next

hot run around-and-mindlessly shoot-things Doom clone, GoldenEye took a bold step forward and added what was noticeably absent from its competitors: variety. Each stage has you doing something different. For once, you actually have more to do than just find this key or click this switch. You also have to play the game like a spy and not a gung ho Rambo space marine—any one who's played GoldenEye can tell you that stealth is usually more effective than blazing guns. Trust us when we tell you that GoldenEye 007 has set the example for all other first-person shooters to follow.

RUNNER-UP
None

Most Original



PARAPPA THE RAPPER - PS

Flat 2-D Colorform-like characters moving around in wildly cartoonish worlds.

Awesome music with cheesy lyrics.

An eternally hungry bear who D's for

a living. A love affair between a sunflower and a rapping puppy. An onion who teaches kung fu. We can go on and on about how strange and surreal PaRappa the Rapper is, but it still wouldn't do it justice. This is just one of those types of games that you simply must see to believe. The humor, music and graphics are unlike anything you've seen before. Don't be fooled by the childish nature of the game—you'll find yourself hooked and coming back for more. If you're looking for a game that is 100 percent fresh and original, and you're looking for a laugh or two, don't miss this wonderful title.

RUNNERS-UP
Monster Rancher - PS
Blast Corps - N64

Light Gun



TIME CRISIS - PS

What's this? No Runner-up? Yes, Time Crisis is so good that nobody voted for anything else! This isn't much of a surprise, though, considering some of the competition was Maximum Force, S.C.U.D. and Lethal Enforcers I & II. For a conversion from the arcade, Time Crisis on the PlayStation just plain rocks! The graphics are amazing, as are the sound effects. Namco even added extra modes of play to increase the replay value. Time Crisis gives you what a gun game should give: an increased heart rate.

RUNNER-UP
None

Puzzle



BUST-A-MOVE 3 - PS, SAT

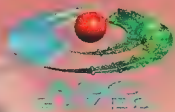
Bust-A-Move 3 is not the most mind-boggling puzzle game on the market, but it is definitely one of the easiest ones to pick up and master. The extremely simple and addictive nature of the game helped it to win this award. Bust-A-Move 3 gives you new characters (with different modes of attack) and a few new tricks (like bouncing balls off the ceiling) to help spice up this familiar formula.

RUNNERS-UP
Intelligent Qube - PS
Super Puzzle Fighter II
Turbo - PS, Saturn

ONE MAN. ONE SOLUTION. ONE STATE OF MIND.

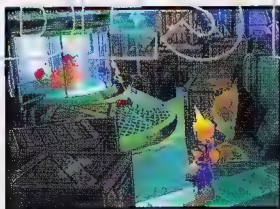


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Graphics



FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

When you have three CDs packed full of rendered full-mo' on video, you know your eyes are in for a treat. Final Fantasy VII takes these gorgeous cinemas and seamlessly combines them with lively characters and amazing backdrops. FFVII looks simply incredible.

RUNNERS-UP

Colony Wars - PS
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS

Music



PARAPPA THE RAPPER - PS

No other game this past year has us humming its tunes more than Parappa the Rapper. The catchy and quirky songs can stay in your head for days. Some of us even imported the CD soundtrack, so we could listen to the music even when we're not playing the game.

RUNNERS-UP

Castlevania: SotM - PS
Soul Blade - PS

Sound



ODDORLD: ABE'S ODDYSEE - PS

Abe's Oddysee became an instant hit with everyone at EGM for plenty of reasons, but no one can forget the amazing sound effects. The voices, explosions, machine guns and yes, even the farts, are all incredible to hear.

RUNNERS-UP

GoldenEye 007 - N64
Colony Wars - PS

Mascot



PARAPPA

The lovable hip-hop puppy is the perfect mascot for us 20 somethings at EGM. He has rhythm, he's a love artist and he's all around too cute to ignore. We think Sony should even trade Crash Bandicoot up and make PaRappa their official spokesmascot.

RUNNERS-UP

Lara Croft
Crash Bandicoot

Peripheral



RUMBLE PAK - N64

This innovative little product gives console gamers controller tactile feedback for the first time ever. Whether someone's shooting at your ship in Star Fox 64 or a grenade's exploding at your feet in GoldenEye 007, you'll know it 'cause you'll feel it.

RUNNERS-UP

Sony Dual Analog Joypad - PS
Namco Guncon - PS

Compilation



STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION - PS, SAT

This may not be the most ideal Street Fighter compilation we could dream up, but that doesn't mean it's not a fantastic one on its own. This two disc set gives you an improved version of SF Alpha 2 and the classic Super SF 2 and Super SF 2 Turbo. It's a great value considering the SF games are the best 2-D fighters around.

RUNNERS-UP

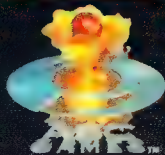
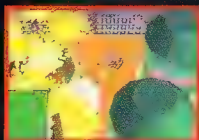
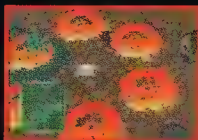
Namco Museum Volume 3 - PS
Arcade's Greatest Hits: Midway Coll. 2 - PS



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Readers' Choice Awards

You've sent in your votes. Now, after several mind-numbing weeks of counting ballots (and a few paper cuts later), we have the final results. You spoke your mind, and now we're lett'ng the industry see

what you, its bread and butter, think are the best games of 1997. Counting your votes has been fun and all, but we think we're going to implement some sort of Scantron system for the 1998 Readers' Choice Awards...

All Systems



FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

The voice is loud and clear: Final Fantasy VII is your favorite game of 1997 by a comfortable margin. This game is perhaps the most highly anticipated 32-bit game ever, and for good reason. When it finally arrived, it lived up to almost everybody's expectations. The story, graphics and music kept us all enthralled for days. Sony and SquareSoft scored big with this one, no doubt about it. (And to think, SCEA once had an anti-RPG attitude...)

RUNNERS-UP
GoldenEye 007 - N64
Diddy Kong Racing - N64

TOP WRITE-IN
Colony Wars - PS

Nintendo 64

GOLDENEYE 007

RUNNERS-UP
Diddy Kong Racing
Star Fox 64

TOP WRITE-IN
WCW vs. NWO

PlayStation

FINAL FANTASY VII

RUNNERS-UP
Tomb Raider 2
Castlevania: Symphony of the Night

TOP WRITE-IN
Moto Racer

Saturn

MADDEN NFL 98

RUNNERS-UP
Saturn Bomberman
Fighters MegaMix

TOP WRITE-IN
Enemy Zero

Arcade

GAME OF THE YEAR

TEKKEN 3

RUNNERS-UP
Mortal Kombat 4
House of the Dead

TOP WRITE-IN
Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter

Action

GAME OF THE YEAR

GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

RUNNERS-UP
Castlevania: Symphony of the Night - PS
Crash Bandicoot 2 - PS

TOP WRITE-IN
Tomb Raider 2 - PS

Sports

GAME OF THE YEAR

MADDEN NFL 98 - PS, SAT

RUNNERS-UP
NFL GameDay '98 - PS
International Superstar Soccer 64 - N64

TOP WRITE-IN
NFL Quarterback Club '98 - N64

Racing

GAME OF THE YEAR

DIDDY KONG RACING - N64

RUNNERS-UP
Extreme G - N64
NASCAR 98 - PS, Saturn

TOP WRITE-IN
Mario Kart 64 - N64

Fighting

GAME OF THE YEAR

STREET FIGHTER EX

RUNNERS-UP PLUS α - PS
Soul Blade - PS
Street Fighter Collection - PS, Saturn

TOP WRITE-IN
Bushido Blade - PS

Role-Playing

GAME OF THE YEAR

FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

RUNNERS-UP
Wild Arms - PS
Albert Odyssey - Saturn

TOP WRITE-IN
Vandal Hearts - PS



"Best Flight Sim/Shooter."
Ultra Game Players, Holiday '97

Score: 5 out of 5.
"Colony Wars puts all other space shooters to shame."

—PSM, January '98

Colony Wars ranks as the best space combat game on the PlayStation."

GamePro, November '97

CRY FREEDOM

COLONY WARS

Over 300,000 copies of Colony Wars sold by mid-1998, and the game's success is the source of a lot of interest in our team's work with different flight characteristics and weapons, and the more than 70 unique missions, scenarios, and battle scenarios a player can enjoy over 40 different units. The last of freedom is here. We need nothing to say it.



EPIC SPACE CONFLICT



Readers' Choice Awards

Adventure

GAME OF THE YEAR

TOMB RAIDER II - PS

RUNNERS-UP

Resident Evil: Director's Cut - PS
Enemy Zero - Saturn

TOP WRITE-IN

Treasures of the Deep - PS

Side-Scrolling

GAME OF THE YEAR

CASTLEVANIA: SOTN - PS

RUNNERS-UP

Mega Man X4 - PS, Saturn
Mischief Makers - N64

TOP WRITE-IN

Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS

Strategy

GAME OF THE YEAR

C & C: RED ALERT - PS

RUNNERS-UP

WarCraft II - PS, Saturn
Vandal Hearts - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS

Shooter

OF THE YEAR

STAR FOX 64 - N64

RUNNERS-UP

RayStorm - PS
Nanotek Warrior - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Colony Wars - PS

Light Gun

OF THE YEAR

TIME CRISIS - PS

RUNNERS-UP

Crypt Killer - PS, Saturn
Maximum Force - PS, Saturn

TOP WRITE-IN

None

First-Person Shooter

OF THE YEAR

GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

RUNNERS-UP

Duke Nukem - N64, PS, Saturn
Turok: Dinosaur Hunter - N64

TOP WRITE-IN

Doom 64 - N64

Puzzle

GAME OF THE YEAR

TETRISPHERE - N64

RUNNERS-UP

Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo - PS, Saturn
Intelligent Qube - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Tecmo Stackers - PS

Multiplayer

GAME OF THE YEAR

GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

RUNNERS-UP

Diddy Kong Racing - N64
Mario Kart 64 - N64

TOP WRITE-IN

NFL GameDay '98 - PS

Most Original

GAME OF THE YEAR

PARAPPA THE RAPPER - PS

RUNNERS-UP

Blast Corps - N64
Monster Rancher - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Final Fantasy VII - PS

Best Compilation

OF THE YEAR

STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION - PS, SATURN

RUNNERS-UP

Sonic Jam - Saturn
Arcade's Greatest Hits: Midway Coll. 2 - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Resident Evil: Director's Cut - PS



Best Graphics

OF THE YEAR

FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

RUNNERS-UP

GoldenEye 007 - N64
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

NFL Quarterback Club '98 - N64

Best Music

OF THE YEAR

FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

RUNNERS-UP

PaRappa the Rapper - PS
Castlevania: Symphony of the Night - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

GoldenEye 007 - N64

Best Sound

OF THE YEAR

GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

RUNNERS-UP

Star Fox 64 - N64
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Final Fantasy VII - PS

Favorite Mascot

OF THE YEAR

LARA CROFT

RUNNERS-UP

Mario
Crash Bandicoot

TOP WRITE-IN

Cloud

Best Peripheral

OF THE YEAR

RUMBLE PAK - N64

RUNNERS-UP

Sony Dual Analog Joypad - PS
InterAct GameShark - N64

TOP WRITE-IN

ASCII Grip - PS



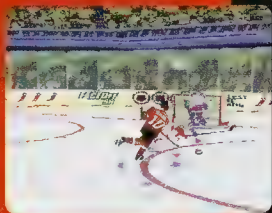
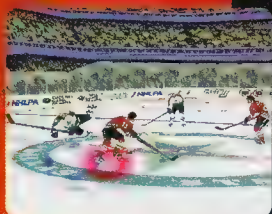


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G

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TAKES TO SCORE, IT SEEMS ONLY FITTING
THAT IT'S CALLED A GOAL.**



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ARCADES GROW UP

Last month we showed how game rooms have outgrown your local mall. Now, we visit the biggest of the big arcades to see if these titanic entertainment centers live up to the hype.



It's a three story video game, a towering mass of big-screen monitors, hanging seats and joysticks. Called Vertical Reality, this game-ride hybrid launches 12 players—all harnessed into independently moving chairs—up its jet-black superstructure. As crosshairs zip like electric insects across stacked rear-projection displays, players blast on-screen baddies. The higher their score, the higher their seats loft skyward, leaving no doubt as to who's the game's current guru. The best players reach Vertical Reality's summit, 24 feet off the floor, before plunging earthward at the close of a five-minute game that cost \$3.

And this titanic piece of gaming hardware is the first thing you see when you step into Steven Spielberg's GameWorks in Seattle. Fitting, since Vertical Reality embodies much of what GameWorks and other location-based entertainment (LBE) centers are seemingly all about: It's cutting edge, it pits gamer against gamer in a social environment, and—as critics like to point out—it's pricey and not exactly rich in replayability (especially after the novelty wears off). It's also something you definitely can't play at home—or in your local game room.

If you read last month's feature on the

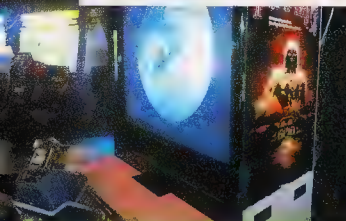


Only the best players reach the tippy top of Vertical Reality, one of Spielberg's ideas. "He wanted something that let you physically see who's winning," said Doug Juhn, the senior computer artist who helped design the massive ride/game.



LBE—What is it? Typically, LBE sites combine eateries with an arcade that's crammed with the newest games, many of them linked to foster a more social atmosphere. As a high-tech hook, LBEs also offer VR gear and moving-sim ride games, and some even have Internet lounges. As a rule, LBEs are expensive places to play (expect to drop about \$40 a visit), and all are much bigger than

your typical arcade. To give you a sense of scale, the average mall arcade is between 2,000 and 4,000 square feet. LBEs range from 50,000 square feet (Dave & Buster's) to 100,000 square feet (DisneyQuest). LBEs are the newest catchphrase in the industry's alphabet soup of abbreviations, which also includes CECs (Children's Entertainment Centers, such as Discovery Zone) and FECs (Family Entertainment Centers, such as Chuck E. Cheese's).



evolution of arcades, you learned that LBEs like GameWorks and their over-the-top attractions are the latest prize of the coin-op industry's eternal quest for the Next Big Thing, that elusive entertainment experience that'll draw gamers away from their home systems and into the arcade. As you'd expect, these high-tech clubs aren't without their critics, who fault them for being too expensive and too gimmicky. So this month we checked out GameWorks first hand, as well as looked at other pioneering LBEs and some on the horizon, to see if the critics are right.

Why did we focus on GameWorks? It's certainly not the first venue to combine eateries, arcade games and ride game gadgetry under one roof. But with parent companies Sega, DreamWorks SKG and Universal Studios behind it—as well as big-name investors like Bill Gates—GameWorks has become the headline-making LBE to watch ever since it was founded in 1996. Even more noteworthy is GameWorks' behind-the-scenes talent. Its chairman and CEO is Skip Paul, former president of Atari's coin-op games

division. Heading up the design team is Jon Snoddy, a former Disney Imagineer who founded the Walt Disney Virtual Reality Studio. Yet much of GameWorks' look, feel and content is the brainchild of its famous co-creator, Steven Spielberg, who by all accounts is the most die-hard gamer in Hollywood (lore has it he even lugs arcade machines with him on shoots). All eyes are now on this technology-friendly director to see if he has invented the next arcade paradigm.

If there's not a GameWorks near you, just wait. Since the first center opened in Seattle last March, four other GameWorks have sprung up across the country, in Las Vegas; Ontario, Calif.; Grapevine, Texas; and Tempe, Ariz. Others will open this year, including one in Miami, Chicago and Brazil. As many as 100 additional GameWorks will open internationally over the next five years.

The five current GameWorks all share a similar look, although each packs enough little touches to tie it in with the local landscape (Seattle's site features a coffee house, while Las Vegas has adopted an Area 51 look). Most are about



GameWorks' roving cameras and multimedia DJ are always seeking something to put up on the arcade's TV cluster—meaning you could wind up a small-screen star if you're leading the pack in Indy 500. Just remember not to pick your nose.





At four bucks a pop, GameWorks' eight linked Indy 500s are the most expensive game in the joint. But this Sega racing masterpiece does come with every imaginable perk, including moving seats, cockpit cameras and a live announcer to point out your racing prowess—or lack of it.



30,000 square feet, with Las Vegas' 50,000 square-foot site being the largest. The decor itself is a mix of spiral staircases, mast-mounted TV screens and cement-slab floors. Pre-stressed and rust-painted conduits and sheet metal dangle from ceilings and brick walls—all lending credence to GameWorks' imaginative design premise. "The idea behind GameWorks' look is that it's an old, abandoned game factory," said Jordon Eagan, operations manager of the Seattle GameWorks. "The story goes that a bunch of hardcore gamers have come in and taken it over, replacing old games with all the newest, cutting-edge stuff."

The newest of this new stuff sits in one of GameWorks' three zones, the Loading Dock. Here, under an ear-bending blare of alterna-rock from the supercharged sound system, guests play the latest games from Sega, Namco, Konami,

Midway and Capcom, including The Lost World: Jurassic Park, House of the Dead, Top Skater, NFL Blitz and linked Tokyo Wars and Super GTs. Players will even find new Sega games that have yet to debut in other arcades. "When one of your parent companies is Sega, you get those fringe benefits," Eagan said.

Another perk—this one a key part of Spielberg's gaming philosophy—is that you'll never have to play a GameWorks game alone if you don't want to. "Steven Spielberg d'dn't want just an arcade where people go in and stand by themselves and play games," Eagan said. "He wanted a kind of social environment where people look forward to meeting other people. Our crew members on the floor are called Game Hosts, and they're down there to provide or at least initiate that interaction." Sure enough, this teen and 20 something team of arcade wonks will hop on a game and teach newbies its tricks or play against anyone looking for two-player action. They'll even match you up with another guest if you're both seeking some head-to-head MK4 or VF3 fisticuffs.



Pick a card: Forget about feeding dollars into token machines. LBEs rely on so-called Smart Cards, which guests purchase, fill with credits, then slip into each game's slot. Incidentally, the cards also make it less glaringly obvious that you're spending a buck or more per play.





But if the Loading Dock is supposed to be the most competitive zone in GameWorks, another zone, the Arena, is the most kinetic. Here, guests find the really, really big stuff, the proprietary games exclusively to GameWorks. Vertical Reality is one of these machines. Another is Surge Rock, an interactive indoor climbing wall located at the Las Vegas GameWorks. But while these two ride games offer a fun, novel, gimmicky experience, it's the Arena's third attraction—Game Arc—that holds the most promise. Game Arc is a high-end network of eight game stations, each with 6-foot convex screens that provide a 90-degree field of view for several familiar 3-D games. The system is currently running modified versions of Interplay's *Descent 2* and *Redneck Rampage*. For 25 cents a minute, as many as four players can stalk each other in the games' Deathmatch Modes.

New Game Arc games are on the way, including air and space combat sims and the king of multiplayer PC titles, *Quake*. "We eventually want to have a different game playing each day so

The Prototype: Dave & Buster's

GameWorks may be getting all the attention these days, but it certainly didn't pioneer the concept of the high-tech club. "You have foos on Wall Street coining phrases like 'entertainment' 10 years after we were doing it," said David Paine, VP of communications for the mega-successful LBE chain Dave & Buster's.

Since founders Dave Corriveau and Buster Corley opened the first of these restaurant-arcade combos in a converted Dallas warehouse in 1982, Dave & Buster's has grown into a 12 location phenomenon that stretches across the United States and into the U.K. (with plans for D&B's in the Pacific Rim and Mexico). Like GameWorks, each 50,000-square-foot D&B packs the latest arcade games—especially linked titles such as *Tokyo Wars* and *Daytona USA*. Also like GameWorks, these games aren't cheap, most costing at least 75 cents per play (oh, and don't forget the \$5 cover charge). D&B also features a mock casino, pool tables, skee-ball, VR gear and ride games in a more upscale environment than that of similar venues.

So far, this mix has worked better for D&B than anyone else (the company earns about \$15 million annually—which, incidentally, is roughly how much it costs to build one GameWorks). It's no surprise then that the chain is seen as the prototype for success. "We offer a model for a lot of people now," Paine said, "but there's still no one

out there doing it, even if you look at foos like GameWorks, who's geared toward a younger crowd. We've always been an adult concept."

That's what gives D&B's game room its uniqueness—it's not for kids. Guests can buy \$3 beers at the bar, then set them on drink tables that stand beside each game. No one under 21 is let in without a guardian, and all underage guests must leave at 10 p.m.

But the D&B experience may turn off gamers who crave a more chaotic arcade environment. There's a dress code. Show up in your favorite dirty T-shirt and you probably won't get past the front desk. No hats allowed. And if your buddies get too rowdy, the restaurant's well-dressed security staff remind them of the house conduct rules. But don't expect D&B's adults only policies to change. After all, the formula's working, and it's certainly appealing to casual gamers (who may not be as keen on games as *EGM's* editors and readers). "A lot of guys who like to play games here won't play at a kid arcade," Paine said, "because that's exactly who you're playing against, a bunch of 13-, 14-, and 15-year-old experts who will kick your rear all day long."



Young guns: Guests rarely have a tough time finding other players for competition. GameWorks is usually a pretty busy place, with about 50,000 gamers a week visiting the Seattle location. Nearly 3 million guests have hit all five sites since the first GameWorks opened last March.



Although the jury's still out on whether GameWorks' over-the-top approach to arcades will be a long-thriving success, other big names in the entertainment game are jumping into the LBE business. Biggest among them is Disney, whose two smaller Club Disney centers are a hit with the tyke set. Disney's next feat of imagineering is the highly hyped DisneyQuest, a five-story indoor theme park set to open in Florida's Walt Disney World Resort in the

DisneyQuest, and the Rest

summer of 1998, with a smaller site opening in Chicago in '99 and more than 20 centers to follow.

Similar to GameWorks, the 100,000-square foot DisneyQuest will be divided into several zones, which rely heavily on proprietary ride-based VR adventures many starring Disney characters. Guests will enter the Explore Zone, for instance, and ride a magic carpet through the world of *Aladdin*. In the Score Zone they'll become human pinballs in a ride/game called the *Mighty Ducks Pinball Slam*. Also proposed is the Create

Zone's Imagineering Studio, where guests can design their own roller coaster, then go for a test ride in a 360-degree moving simulator. True to the LBE formula, DisneyQuest will offer a restaurant and Internet lounge.

Following Sega's lead, Namco Cyberainment, the world's largest arcade operator, has recently stepped up its LBE interests by buying heavily into Skyline Entertainment's XS arcade concept. The first XS center, located in New York's Times Square, is strikingly similar to GameWorks. It packs most of the same games, moving-sim rides, laser tag, an internet lounge and the usual steep prices for game credits. Namco will open XS 'stes across the country.

And there's no end in sight to the list of forthcoming LBE projects. Sega is preparing Sonic City, an international chain of more than 30 VR arcades. Even Sony is building a four-story LBE in San Francisco, with plans for similar venues in other cities. Heck, if we listed all the other aser tag, Battletech and sportsbar/arcade centers popping up (and, in some cases, shutting down) across the country, we'd fill the rest of this magazine.



Spielberg, who colleagues label a "crazy gamer," is no stranger to the arcade he helped create. He often brings his kids to GameWorks, or helps crack open the crates of new Sega games at Stage 35, where he holds the record on Super GT.

people won't get tired of it," Eagan said. GameWorks is also upgrading Game Arc's hardware. They hope to link it with Game Arcs in other cities so guests can engage in nationwide deathmatch mayhem.

All of GameWorks' proprietary games, as well as the look of the centers themselves, are developed in a seemingly appropriate place: a soundstage deep in the backlot of Universal Studios. Called Stage 35, this expanse of workstations, wall-to-wall concept art and scattered Sega games is where Spielberg, Snoddy and the rest of the GameWorks creative team invent the high-tech arcade's newest toys. Even Sega's AM teams drop by now and then to talk gaming shop.

Ideas flow through Stage 35 constantly, but so far one particular hardware topic has remained taboo. "We really want this to be more of a high-tech club than an arcade," said Doug Juhn, Stage 35's senior computer artist, "and something about the VR headsets, they're a very private experience, and it doesn't encourage a lot of interaction. Some of

the reasons for Game Arc and its very large screens or Vertical Reality, which is half a ride and half a game, is to have some sort of spectator appeal and to make this more of a social thing, where people are looking at each other while they're playing. If we could somehow take VR and make it into more of a social experience, then we'll do it." Stage 35's current project is Night Raptor, a ride-game that uses scent jets and a revolutionary audio system to put you in the middle of Jurassic Park at night, where you must rely solely on your senses of hearing and smell to avoid being raptor chow. The game will ship later this year.

GameWorks guests looking for a more subdued gaming experience can head to the third zone, the Loft, where they'll find pool tables, a cozy Internet lounge (where, for 15 cents a minute, they can browse the Web and send e-mail) and classic arcade games set in a bank of wooden cabinets. But it's also here that the high prices of GameWorks' games become most obvious. You'll pay 50 cents to play Donkey Kong, Missile Command and Phoenix—classics that





By day, GameWorks' clientele is a varied lot of teens, businessmen on lunch break and the kindergarten crowd. But underage guests are shoed away at 10 p.m., when the arcade takes on a night-club feel.



have never cost more than a quarter. The newer games, of course, are even more expensive. Linked Daytona JSA costs \$2 per play. VF3 costs \$1.25. You'll pay 75 cents for Sou. Bade. In fact, expect to blow about \$40 during a typical two-hour visit to GameWorks unless you walk in the last two hours before closing, when \$10 buys unlimited playtime.

But industry gripes aimed at GameWorks and other LBEs go beyond high game prices. "I don't think they have enough new, interesting things," said Atari founder Nolan Bushnell, whose Chuck E. Cheese's entertainment centers helped mold the LBE model. "I think now they're just glorified arcades. They really need to have a better focus on some of the other elements of the family. If you really look at it, they're still focused primarily at males."

Another concern is that LBEs may knock smaller arcades off the map, just as Blockbuster and Borders brought doom for mom-and-pop video and book stores. After all, very few independent arcades can afford Sega's ultra-deluxe \$20,000 arcade machines. But don't

worry about the little guys just yet. With Intel, Microsoft and the AMDA pushing for the development of cheaper, PC-based arcade games, the smaller arcades will soon have affordable options. And not all game developers are creating super-expensive titles. "That's why companies other than Sega or Namco exist, such as us," said Roger Sharp, Midway's marketing director (Midway's relatively inexpensive stand-up NFL Blitz is the current star of the arcades, raking in more quarters than any other game). "We're making affordable games, and we're doing it for a broad market. If the other guys want to do the big stuff, then go ahead and do it. Knock yourselves out."

But what do we think about GameWorks, which, admittedly, is still a work in progress? We have to say, Spielberg's neo arcade offers an exciting mix of the latest games and exclusive thrill-ride attractions. It's the price that makes us think twice. We'll no doubt pay occasional visits to our local GameWorks when it opens in Chicago. But between paydays, the local mall arcade will still suit us just fine. ☺



While LBEs can afford The Lost World: Jurassic Park, Super GT and other super-big, super-expensive machines, its affordable arcade titles like Midway's megafun NFL Blitz that'll keep the smaller arcades in business. Of course, you can play Blitz at GameWorks, too.

Depression hurts. *Fighting Force* and *Tomb Raider II* can help.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

- | | |
|---|---|
| ■ | Persistent sadness and or irritability. |
| ■ | Recurring thoughts of how much better life would be if you had <i>Fighting Force</i> or <i>Tomb Raider II</i> . |
| ■ | Statements such as, "I'm bad. I'm stupid. No one likes me." |

When depression strikes, immediately seek the help of a trained professional at your local video game store.



Wiping secretions



Research shows that the leading cause of depression among gamers is a noticeable lack of Eidos games.

Fortunately, this deficiency can be treated both safely and effectively with games like Fighting Force

or Tomb Raider II. But early intervention is crucial. Or else, it's only a matter of time before they threaten to do something really stupid, like go to therapy.



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Review Crew

Our Philosophy

Whew, the rush is over! Ninety-nine reviews in three months was a lot of work! Anyway, here's how we do it: Each reviewer gives a game an overall score, which is displayed behind the review and based on how the game compares to other titles for the same system. In addition, the reviewers rate each game's graphics, sound, ingenuity and replay value. The averages of these scores are listed at the bottom.

Editors' Choice



Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.



Games that average at least an 8.0 receive Silver Awards

R Kirby Scale

10-Perfection

An absolutely flawless experience. It doesn't get any better

9-Virtually Flawless

Drop what you're doing and buy this nearly perfect game

8-Semiradical

Delivers everything you'd want in a game despite minor flaws

7-Worthy

A solid title that you won't regret buying

6-Good, Not Great

Sure, it has its problems, but it's still fun to play

5-Average

Not great, not crap. A ho-hum title that isn't for everybody

4-Rent First

We have problems here. Definitely try before you buy

3-Time Waster

Playing it for more than 10 minutes gives you a migraine

2-Don't Even Rent

The only point in playing this garbage is to make fun of it

1-Flush It

Run for your life if you see it, or use it as a coaster

Guest Reviewer

Chris Johnston

EGM News Editor

Chris is the guy responsible for the Video Game News section at the front of this very magazine and on our online site www.videogamespot.com. A big fan of Japanese animation, Chris digs action-platformers and puzzle games and the occasional life sim (Tokimeki Memorial). For the record, he has seen *Titanic* only three times, not four as the rest of the office seems to believe. The youngest of the EGM staff members, Chris came back from the Winter CES disappointed that he couldn't gamble, but after bringing back information on some new Michael Jackson shell speakers, all is well.

Current Favorites

Aundra
Klonoa
Kirby's Star Walker
Resident Evil Z
Favorite Genres: Action/Puzzle

Shawn Smith



March Madness has hit Shawn! Instead of getting his usual Frutos-brand corn chips out of the vending machine, he gets two packages of Twinkies! Whoa, he has really gone over the deep end. Whatever state he's in, he's still stoked about all the games due out this year—nearly all of which have yet to be released! This is a good year to be a gamer.

Current Favorites

Point Blank
X-Men Vs. SF (Japanese)
Resident Evil 2
Galaga

Favorite Genres:
Strategy/Puzzle

Dan Hsu



Shoe is running around telling everyone that John was weeping like a baby when he played Resident Evil 2. But in fact, it was Shoe who jumped out of his chair during several scary RE2 scenes. In other news, Shoe is going nuts looking for a copy of GameBreaker '98. He's hoping to relive the Michigan Rose Bowl/National Championship glory!

Crispin Boyer



Cris spent much of this month checking out super-size arcades for his feature on LBEs. He said the big ride game attractions were fun, but nothing beats his all-time favorite thrill: racing his car around the office's ice-covered parking lot at night. Now, if only there was a way to keep the lot icy all year long. How about it, science?

Current Favorites

NFL Blitz (Arcade)
Resident Evil 2
Mystical Ninja
Colony Wars

Favorite Genres:
Sports/Strategy

Kraig Kujawa



Kraig has just finished yet another book—this time *The Ultimate Guide To Tomb Raider II*. Luckily for him, he finished it just in time to watch his Packers try to make a return trip to the Super Bowl. By the time you read this, you'll know whether Kraig is home crying or rejoicing due to the fate of his cheese-powered team.



John Ricciardi

John's been spending an abnormal amount of time with Final Fantasy Tactics and Tactics Ogre. He's obviously been bitten by the strategy bug, and it's only a matter of time before he begins referring to everyone as "units" and commanding Tricorne Terry to burn down local villages in hopes of bringing back treasure. Sad, really sad...

Current Favorites

X-Men Vs. SF (Japanese)
Yoshi's Story
Rival Schools UBF (Arcade)
Street Fighter Collection

Favorite Genres:
Fighting/Racing

Kelly Rickards



With spring just around the corner and cupid's arrows flailing about, it's no wonder the look of love is in Kelly's eyes. Upon further investigation, we discovered the recipient of Kelly's passion is the Japanese Saturn version of X-Men Vs. Street Fighter. When prompted, Kelly said that his 2-year-old daughter, Kasia, holds the key to his heart.



Sushi-X

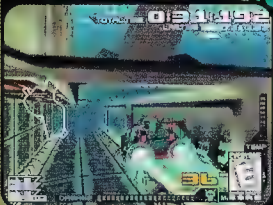
Kelly's visit to our offices this month was rather eventful...he actually beat Sushi in SFA2! Either Sushi is losing his touch, or he's distracted by the news of Zelda's release delay. Never fear, our masked man will be on his feet again soon. We hear he's already planning his revenge. Maybe Kelly should hide next month! Sushi may never be the same.

Current Favorites

Street Fighter Collection
Klonoa
Street Fighter EX Plus
Tomb Raider II

Favorite Genres:
Fighting/RPGs

AEROGAUGE



Developer: Locomotive

Featured in: EGM #103

AeroGauge is cut from the same cloth as futuristic racers like WingOut XL and Extreme G. Unfortunately, it couldn't hold their cocky charm, so to speak. The fancy-looking flying cars are the highlight of the game. They consist of radically different designs, complete with moving flaps when you make turns. Also, they race on some neat courses, one of which spirals around an island then into an underwater lagoon. That's where the complications end. Technically, AeroGauge is very watchable. Although the tracks look good, the polygonal pop-up is very annoying—it's so extreme in places that it can mess you up by momentarily popping things up in front of you at noppotune times. This adds a bit of frustration to a game that isn't too much fun to begin with. Even though you can fly and perform impromptu speed bursts, AeroGauge, for the most part, is a mundane racing game. Perhaps weapons or defensive countermeasures could have done a lot to make the races more interesting—there just isn't enough to do. One thing is certain, the horrid physics and music sure doesn't help the enjoyment of the game. Was forced to lower the volume and pop in my own CD. AeroGauge isn't a bad game, but it falls into the rapidly filling bucket of mediocre Nintendo 64 games that refuse to offer anything special to set them apart.

Kraig

I would best categorize AeroGauge as a futuristic hovercraft racing game in the mold of F-Zero or WingOut XL, though the craft in AeroGauge can fly around a lot like Star Fox style. The graphics are good and the track design is interesting, but with only four tracks at the start, there's not much variety early on. Additionally, it takes a lot of practice to turbo around corners, which is rather essential if you want to win races.

Kelly

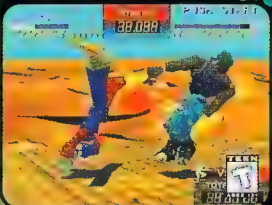
The first thing that struck me as I stange about this title is how smooth the hovercraft flies through the air. The physics are truly amazing, and some might experience a feeling of vertigo, or seasickness, due to the ridiculous amount of pop-up, but even more added at the insane difficulty level. I can't think of ones should have to learn the most difficult maneuver in the game—turbo rolling—to win a rare early on.

Sushi

All the intensity of racing—without the fun. Yeah, another disappointment this month. AeroGauge could've been something more, but it ends up being no more than a lame version of Extreme G (except in the game you can fly). The graphics are nice and the music catchy, but that just doesn't cut it. On top of this, the computer AI is a bit on the hard side. Maybe some power-ups would've helped along with less horizon pop-up.

Shawn

FIGHTER'S DESTINY



Developer: Imagineer

Featured in: EGM #103

This is the best fighting game on the N64. What's the catch? The N64 is full of crappy fighting games. On its own merits, Fighter's Destiny isn't a bad game. It gradually grew on me the more I played it. It's very different from anything you've seen before. My favorite part of the game is its scoring system. Instead of winning rounds by depleting your opponent's energy, you have to win by scoring a certain amount of points. This one feature is enough to hold my interest in this game longer than most others (since these points are determined by how you bring down your foe: choke, throw, ring-out, knock out, special move or judge's decision). I almost feel like I'm playing a wrestling or a boxing game, rather than a Street Fighter clone. I also love the way the game lets you learn new moves (and save them) for overcoming certain challenges. A few faults, however, no doubt this fighter back. First, I don't like the actual fighting engine. Although you get a ton of very cool moves, they are all executed with only two attack buttons making a lot of the game a button mashing contest. Second, slowdown and the occasional pause (especially after throws) interrupt the flow of the game. The counters and throw escapes are cool, but the few problems keep this game from scoring too high.

Dan

While it's nothing revolutionary, Fighter's Destiny does have a few innovations. Namely, a customizable point-scoring system and the ability to learn new moves by beating a master boss. Its simple fighting engine lets you pull off a lot of cool throws and counters, but matches can get boring when you pit two throw happy characters against each other. The graphics and character designs are all right with lots of slowdown.

Crispin

I'm not sure where "Destiny" plays a part in this knock-down fighter, but it's a very respectable game in my book. I like the innovative gameplay engine, using a point system rather than just energy bars. Of course, you can play the standard fare fighting style, but you'll enjoy the fresh challenge provided by the unique engine. I only wish the fighters were cleaned up a bit with more polygons and better-looking costumes.

Sushi

Fighter's Destiny is the first fighting game for the N64 that's decent. What really bothers me about this game, and perhaps I'm spoiled by the luxury of CD ROM, is that the voices are muffled and rather "80s in nature" ("Party on!"). The graphics are average at best, with that N64 static look to them, a look I'm tired of. There are tons of options and it's not a good two player mode, but it lacks that extra punch to make it a really good fighter. Chris

JEOPARDY!



Developer: Gametek

Featured in: N/A

Not only does Jeopardy! suffer from the same problems as the 16-bit versions, this time they're even worse. For starters, when it comes to spelling out your answers (er, questions), this is the least forgiving console Jeopardy! yet. If you don't type in the exact phrase the game's looking for, you're screwed (even with the Loose Spelling Option turned on). But even more annoying is Jeopardy!'s tendency to repeat the same categories and questions in successive games. Although GameTek claims Jeopardy! packs more than 4,000 questions in 650 categories, time and again we saw the same questions pop up, game after game. According to GameTek, the cartridge does track of when questions have been asked when you switch off your N64. If only the developers had utilized the Controller Pak to keep track of questions you've already answered. That way, the game wouldn't recycle old questions until after you played through all 650 categories. Even the graphics are lousy. Contestants aren't animated in the slightest, making them about as lifelike as cardboard cutouts (you do get a few FMV clips of Alex Trebek, though). Not that visuals are important, but if the game's gonna be ugly, at least the developers could have spent extra time perfecting the gameplay, which they obviously did not.

Crispin

This version of my favorite game show may have the nice visuals (like the pointless FMV), but I found the older 16-bit versions to be far superior. My biggest gripe is that this cart is very unforgiving. Even if you get the Options to "loose spelling accepted," you have to type in exactly what the game wants for the most part; you can't deviate from the spelling or exact phrasing. Jeopardy! is always fun, but this version is lacking.

Dan

The 16-bit versions of Jeopardy! can be fun, but those questions take time to master. This is why I thought a home translation might be unfortunate. I was wrong. The graphics in this N64 cart are really lame, the contestants look like paper statues and the same questions are often repeated making me feel like I'm in the movie Groundhog Day. You could rent it, but why bother? This is, in my opinion, a game that could've been cool.

Shawn

At first, I was all set to give Jeopardy! the standard "this is fun for all ages" review that you'd expect from any decent game show title. After playing several games, though, I stumbled upon a variety of annoying problems that forced me to lower my score (like repeat categories almost every time and extremely lame CPU judgment on many answers that would've definitely been OK on the actual show). Disappointing, to say the least.

John

Number of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Vehicle Design

Worst Feature: Horrible Track Pop-Up

Number of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Fresh Concepts

Worst Feature: Too Much Button-Mashing

Number of Players: 1-3

Best Feature: Jeopardy! Theme Remix

Worst Feature: Categories Keep Repeating

www.gametek.com

www.ascent.com

www.imagineer.com

NAGANO OLYMPICS '98



Publisher: Konami

Developer: Konami

Featured In: EGM #102

I figured if anyone could create a great Winter Olympics game, it'd be Konami—who, after all, brought us the 8-Bit Classic Track & Field and '95 Fun Play Station update. I was wrong. Most of NWO '98's 12 difficult events are neither fun nor exciting, and much of the blame falls on the uninspired control setups. Only a few events—namely bobsledding and speed skating—demand any timing, while controls for the rest are oversimplified. I suppose part of the problem is that Konami tried to make this game more realistic, since it carries the official Nagano Winter Olympics license. Sure, the venues may mirror the real-world counterparts in Nagano, Japan, but that means we've denied the thrill, of, say, an insanely steep alpine slalom down a super-steep mountain. Don't expect any multiplayer innovations, either. Up to four players can compete, but simultaneously forcing everyone to take turns (imagine how cool it would have been to play a four-player bobsled event, in which everyone tries to lean into the turns at the same time). On the plus side, the game has decent graphics and plenty of events. But when it comes to the really want to compete in Curling (sort of an Olympic version of shuffleboard) I would have preferred fewer events, as long as they were done right.

Crispin

The improved 3-D graphics and snapper load times in the N64 version of Nagano make it a little more palatable than the PS one. It also keeps that analog control "standard on the N64. Don't overestimate these improvements, however—the game still sucks in key areas. The worst offender is the slow games play that the excitement out of most of the events. The few fun ones aren't good enough to save Nagano from mediocrity.

Kraig

First things first, Konami can do much better. When I think of games like Nagano, I think of real, technical Olympic events that are translated into fun, playable game versions. Well, the events may be based on the Olympics, but they sure aren't fun. The main thing that makes them that way is the control—it just doesn't feel right. On top of this, the animation of the characters is poor, and the graphics need more refining.

Shawn

In the areas of diversity and uniqueness, Nagano scores well with plenty of events to keep you busy. The only problem here is that Nagano is only moderately fun to play and gets boring fast. The graphics are below average for the N64 with serious clipping problems and generic textures everywhere. If you love winter games, then maybe Nagano would be your cup of tea. For me, Nagano should have been so much more.

Kelly

OLYMPIC HOCKEY '98



Publisher: Midway

Developer: Trey Arch

Featured In: EGM #102

Now that the Olympics are rounding the corner again, we're seeing the first batch of hastily packaged theme titles. Olympic Hockey '98 is a classic example of a game that does nothing for the genre other than borrow from every other hockey game available. Besides being a near replica of Wayne Gretzky Hockey '98—but with different teams—Olympic Hockey doesn't even make slight improvements to graphics or gameplay in the transition. The hockey players are very bulky for such a high-profile game, with very few polygonal counts. The act on is fast though, and you'll be hard pressed to keep up with the puck at times. Typical options—keypad toggles, player swapping and so forth—are becoming standard fare in all sports titles, so I wasn't very impressed. Perhaps the most bashing of Olympic Hockey is the incredibility stupid goalie AI. Don't worry about losing this game too much. Money plays are everywhere, and it won't take much time to find them. I know that high scores are supposed to be rare in hockey, but apparently not in the universe this one hails from. As it is, the best feature of the game is the multiplayer ability and party game factor. The Arcade Mode is fun for all players, from novice to expert. I wouldn't recommend this one for hardcore hockey fans though.

Sushi

I don't know if it's me, but it seems like this game is Wayne Gretzky Hockey with an Olympic facelift. Whatever the case, I'll stick with Gretzky. I'm not a huge fan of real hockey, but I do enjoy playing a game or two with a controller. I guess that's why I rather use players I've actually heard of. No offense to other countries, but I don't really care about Nimsky Vokolsky and how he's a national hero in the Soviet States.

Shawn

Well, whoopee, if it isn't the second time in six months that Midway has used and repackaged their year-old Wayne Gretzky Hockey game engine. Just about everything here is identical to every other Midway hockey game, except the rosters and team names are changed. Ideally, these teams and rosters would have been integrated in Wayne Gretzky '98 instead of trying to force gamers to buy a whole new game just for the Olympic teams.

Kraig

Oh, come on now. This kind of shameless rehashing of the same game over and over makes me sick. Did you know Wayne Gretzky's 32 Hockey or its incredibly unoriginal sequel with the '98 Sloped on the box? If so, stay away from this game, 'cause it's (once again) the same game. The ONLY way I could possibly recommend this is if you've never owned either Gretzky game. Enough is enough, let's try something new already.

John

SNOWBOARD KIDS



Publisher: Atlus

Developer: Atlus

Featured In: N/A

Although this cutesy racer appears tailored to the kindergarten crowd (like half the other N64 games), Snowboard Kids actually packs plenty of depth and replay value. You get excellent control and six well-designed courses (as well as a hidden track). Yet it's the pay as you play power-up system that makes this game such a standout. To collect the offensive and defensive power ups that alter each course, you have to do more than just race over the top of them—you have to buy them (each costs 100 coins). And the best way to build up your bank account is by performing tricks, which are pulled off using the same intuitive system as Cool Boarders 2. Money raised in each race can be used to buy better snowboards. It's a cool concept that keeps you playing after courses and perfecting your tricks until you can buy the boards needed to win later races (which have you boarding on grass and sand). You also get three mini-games—a downhill snowing spree, a trick-intensive halfpipe and a Time Attack Mode to help raise additional cash. A Training Mode and snowboard paint shop add extra polish to the game. But best of all is the Multiplayer Mode. Four player racing is a blast, and since like in Mario Kart 64—the best power-ups go to the player in last place, you can always be sure of a close race.

Crispin

Snowboard Kids is a surprisingly fun snowboarding game that has a lot of appeal and immense replayability. If you're looking for real fast downhill action, you're not gonna find it here. On the other hand, if you want a snowboarding game with great control, very nice course design, several very fun modes of play and great Mario Kart-esque gameplay, this is your game. Multiplayer is a lot of fun too, and the power ups are very cool.

John

Besides the overly cute characters, SK is a joy to play. I haven't had this much fun since I played Mario Kart for the first time. In fact, Snowboard Kids has better graphics in most instances. I really enjoy the Multiplayer Mode (although it's kinda hard to see certain things), and the One-Player Mode offers plenty of gameplay. For example, I love the way you can save up money to get yourself a better board—very cool.

Shawn

This Mario Kart on the snowy slopes sleeper hit has just about everything going for it: solid controls, great graphics and semirandom action. This is more than just a Mario Kart wanna-be—a few new features make it stand out over its competition. Also, having to line up for the ski lift can make for interesting (and hiarious) situations in multiplayer games. SK needs more courses, but it's still a lot of fun, especially for four.

Dan

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Lots Of Events

Worst Feature: Most Events Just Aren't Fun

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Fun Arcade-Style Action

Worst Feature: Been There, Done That, Twice.

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Four-Player Mode

Worst Feature: Overly Cutesy Character Design

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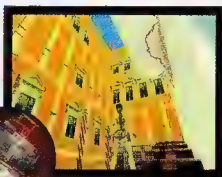
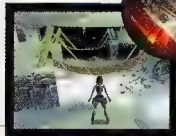
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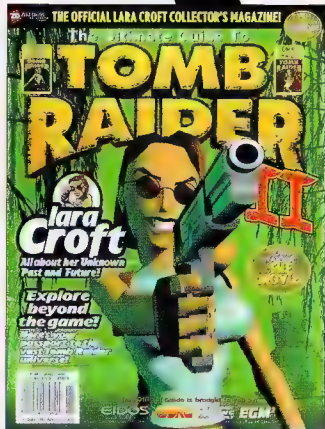
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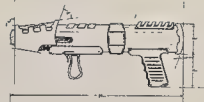
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PLAYER 2 HEARS THE METALLIC CLANK
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PLAYER 2 DETECTS THE WHISTLE
OF TAIL FINS SPLITTING THE AIR
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FIFA RTW 98



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Climax Ent Ltd
Featured In: N/A

I was looking forward to FIFA 98 after the disappointing World Cup Soccer '98. I was hungry for a great Saturn soccer game unfortunately, FIFA 98 really didn't deliver. The biggest problem is that the game is an eyesore. The stadium and fields look flat and lifeless. The players look broken and move at a painstakingly slow frame rate. The shadows even look out of place, especially when we're used to the graphically superior Worldwide '98. Now, normally graphics are a secondary concern for me (gameplay, replay and all), but the other good stuff is way more important, and when the market has so many great soccer games, you need to make them look good. Gameplay-wise, FIFA 98 is above par. The passing game is OK, but it could've been more realistic with accurate leading passes. The goalie AI, as it is with the other FIFA's, leaves a bit to be desired (though it's rather fun to watch the keeper make an exaggerated dive for that slow-rolling ball). Everything else in the game is right on; I can't find many complaints with the game play. But, that all comes down to is now the "clunky" graphics and frame rate get in the way of what I could've been a really solid game. I think this is the last FIFA the Saturn is going to see. It's a disappointing way to end the soccer genre on the Saturn.

Dan

FIFA 98 is a dramatic improvement over last year's FIFA, with much improved gameplay, many more teams and options and a nicely redesigned interface. The game plays well, but not without some minor flaws (unscriptable, poor AI at times, very choppy frame rate, etc.). Still, overall, FIFA 98 is a much more solid, convincing soccer game than World Wide Soccer '98, and without much else to choose from, that's about all that matters.

John

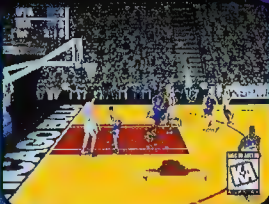
FIFA 98 is the World Cup '98 is a good soccer game for the Saturn. Although, on the plays, models do seem to have a weird, B/B/Bartley proportion, the gameplay is solid and precise, a little bit slow for my taste. As a single-player game, FIFA 98 is pretty fun. In fact I would go as far to say that this is one of the most fun single-player soccer games for the Saturn I've played in a while. Soccer fans should give this one a try.

Kelly

It's too bad that this will be the last year of FIFA soccer for the Saturn, because the series is showing promise. The strength of the game is clearly the wide range of options, as well as the excellent game presentation, which is close to perfect. The gameplay is good but not great. FIFA 98 would have benefited from better player animations and an improved graphics. This isn't as good as the best WW's games, but soccer fans should give FIFA 98 a try.

Kraig

NBA LIVE 98



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports/Realtime Associates
Featured In: N/A

Although I'm not known to be a big sports fan around the offices of EGM, most must sports titles are starting to grow on me. One of the games that has encouraged my new found sports game openness is NBA LIVE. Live 98 is, for me, one of the most enjoyable basketball games on the Saturn so far. Within five minutes of play, I've got a firm handle of the gameplay and control layout, even though I never read the instructions (I find that isn't a sign of an intuitive and playable game, then I don't know what is). If anything, the computer AI is a little bit on the easy side in live 98 (I mean, a rookie like me can play competitive against the Saturn's US Golden State, then something is a little out of whack), and it's also real easy to perform nifty flying slam dunks. Don't get me wrong, it's real entertaining and all, but I don't think you'll see too much action in the NBA Live 98 before. Live 98 is a fun and fast-paced basketball game, but the one thing that does get in the way are the slightly muddy polygonal graphics. The textures seem real nice and are so pretty that it's hard to see what's going on at times. Most of the time it's OK, but there are some instances (high traffic) where it's difficult to see who's doing what. I would be looking for a jump ball game, Live 98, I'd be sure to wear your glasses.

Kelly

It's unfortunate that this game isn't as good as the PlayStation version. Obviously, this was a tricky and easy part to do in a mid-year title addition. The 3D graphics are fuzzy and the frame rate is sporadic, making the on-court action sometimes difficult to control. The sound is static and unexciting, and the TNT broadcasting crew that causes the PS version didn't even bother to show up. EA could've done a lot better job.

Kraig

I have not yet played basketball on a console, but I see much info, but this comes very close. I'd like to see much more work done to the defensive portion of the game, since the offense is so in sync and natural that your defense isn't worth playing mentally. The custom plays are a cool option, and overall, the game's animation is good. Be careful how you set penalties though, or you might end the entire game at the line.

Sushi

NBA LIVE 98 for the Saturn is definitely an above average basketball title, but aside from multiplayer play (which I still say is the only way to play NBA live), the game does not do much for me, don't take to make these kinds of comparisons, but in a honest, the PS version is a lot better, and graphical reasons aside, it's just shouldn't be the case. Why the flawed game play? Why no play by play? I'd be glad to get up to EA's standards.

John

NHL 98



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: MBL Research/EA Canada
Featured In: N/A

My plate is full of hockey games this time of year, and the NHL-brand series has always been a not a ticket item for me. At least since the 16 Bit era. Since then, I've seen powerful systems unable to capture the same enveloping atmosphere and gameplay of the earlier games. NHL 98 provides a glimpse into the future of the series while not living up to the high standards I've placed on hockey games. For starters, the polygons are horrible. I understand the advantages of polygonal animation over bitmap animation, but I spent more time trying to locate the puck than enjoying myself. The gameplay is pretty stable once you look past the chunky hockey players and into the heart of the game engine. I feel the buttons weren't used very efficiently, as if the engine were really meant for these buttons—like the Genesis controller I had a good time playing NHL 98, but a bad time focusing on the action. No matter what camera angle I chose, I couldn't get a view on what was going on. Still, NHL 98 is a solid hockey game with little new to offer other than updated statistics for your favorite players. If you're jonesing for the greatest EA Hockey game, it isn't better than NHL 93 or 95, my friend. If you've already turned in your old 16-bit's, stems though, NHL 98 for the Saturn isn't let you down.

Sushi

EA Sports delivered the definition of hockey, and that the Saturn so badly needed. By far, NHL 98 has the best combination of realism and gameplay that I've ever seen in a hockey game. The action happens at breakneck speeds, the controls are precise and the 3D graphics are excellent. And as is true with all EA games, there are tons of options and features. If you're a hockey fan and have a Saturn, it's no brainer. Buy NHL 98.

Kraig

NHL 98 is by far the best hockey game for Saturn owners, but it's certainly the best. It's obviously not as polished as the PS and PC versions, but EA made just enough cuts, you can't see the refs, the scoreboard is gone, etc. to keep the game as exciting and fun as the aforementioned versions are, without sacrificing much of the game play. The frame rate is choppy, and the animation isn't perfect, but otherwise this is still a great game.

John

This game just screams, "No effort put in the PlayStation version." The shortcuts the programmers took are painfully obvious (like the invisible referee). The frame rate is also horrendous, but on the bright side, the game is light years superior to EA's '98 NHL 98 moves 100, plays better and sounds terrific. It's just too bad EA didn't take the time to perfect this game for the Saturn—it could've been much better.

Dan

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY**
6 7 6 7

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY**
6 5 7 8

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY**
7 8 5 8

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Solid Gameplay Mechanics

Worst Feature: Graphics And Frame-Rate

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Fast Gameplay

Worst Feature: Muddy Graphics

Number Of Players: 1-12

Best Feature: Fast Fluid Gameplay

Worst Feature: Too Frame Rate

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BEAST WARS



Publisher: Hasbro Interactive

Developer: Takara

Featured In: EGM #101

Even as now, this game's a spin-off of a toy line, which in turn is a spin-off of a cool CG television series, developer Takara had plenty of opportunity to do a half decent Beast Wars polygonal comedy based on the toys, thus ensuring that the transformation animations look smooth and realistic. They didn't. They could have used voices from the TV show, thus sparing us cheesy voice acting. They didn't. Above all, they could have made a fun game that packs as much action as the series they didn't. Instead, we have a mission-based adventure that mixes exploration and shooting elements but ends up being dull and repetitive. The lackluster turn is one problem. Much of each stage looks the same, making it easy to get lost. Controls are no picnic either. I died more than a few times after missing what should have been a simple jump over an instant death enemy. **Beast Wars** even takes the fun out of being a Transformer. You can't attack while in Beast Mode, which you must change into occasionally to avoid damage from radioactive environments. And while the game promises 24 missions, 12 for the Maximals, 12 for the Predacons, the level layouts and enemies are nearly identical for both sides. Unless you're a fan of the series and want to take a look at its stars into action, avoid this game.

Crispin

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Lots Of Characters

Worst Feature: Repetitive Missions

www.beastwars.com

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
6 6 5 5

COURIER CRISIS



Publisher: GT Interactive

Developer: New Level

Featured In: N/A

I was close to giving Courier Crisis a score from the depths of hell. In the beginning, I really hated this game. The first half is utter boredom, completely redundant, and way too easy. I rubbed my hands together gleefully and thought to myself, "Boy, I can't wait to rip into this piece of @\$\$ in Review Crew!" The early rounds consist of nothing more than running through similar looking levels, picking up packages, and then attacking them to enter the real pressure, no real challenge. But just when I was about ready to give up any kind of hope for the game, I ran into a level 5 stage, a stage that I couldn't beat with the same lackluster effort the earlier stages required. From this point on, the game becomes a tad bit more fun. These later levels actually require you to perform bike tricks in order to finish them successfully. You simply won't have enough time to finish the tougher areas in a straightforward fashion so that it takes so long to reach this point I'm sure many people will get turned off too early to even give the game a chance. Courier Crisis could've scored a bit higher if the programmers would have toned down the frequency of annoying voices and they definitely should've left out the Green Day wanna-be Generation Xish hip-hop-to-be-grunge music. Overall, C is a average. **Dan**

Number Of Players: 1

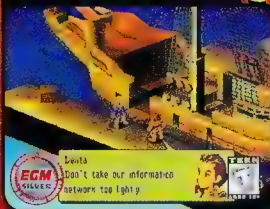
Best Feature: The Level That Requires Skill

Worst Feature: All The Other Levels

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VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
5 5 6 6

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS



Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment

Developer: Square

Featured In: EGM #102

Final Fantasy Tactics is easily one of the best games I've ever played. It alone has made me a slave to the strategy RPG genre. Tactics Ogre is my next victim, and it has sucked away many, many hours of my time over the past few weeks. The game requires a lot of thought and planning, the game's tutorial, as well as the manual, as well as a generous amount of patience, are a must, but the payoff and reward of tactically outwitting your opponents on the battlefield—with characters whose classes and abilities are straight from the Final Fantasy universe—is a feeling I simply can't explain. The story is fantastic, written by the same man who did Tactics Ogre and the soundtrack that goes along with it is, just phenomenal. I do have some complaints, but they are admittedly very minor. For one, the battles seem limited due to the 3-D aspect of them (had they been less visually splendid, they could've taken place on larger battlefields with more troops, etc.) Not a big deal—these what's-sequels are not! Also, some of the NPCs that you can cross during the story seem a bit forced, either sticking out or they're too fake. Otherwise, as long as you've got some patience and a lot of free time (you may never over-sleep to beat, you're going to love Final Fantasy Tactics). Just be warned—it's a **John**

Number Of Players: 1

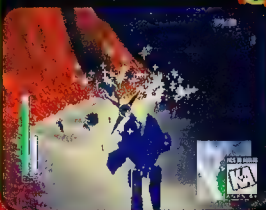
Best Feature: The Job/Ability System Rules

Worst Feature: Battlefields Could've Been Bigger

www.playstation.com

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
9 9 8 6

BEAST WARS



Publisher: Hasbro Interactive

Developer: Takara

Featured in: EGM #101

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Lots Of Characters

Worst Feature: Repetitive Missions

www.hasbro.com

Seeing as how this game's a spin-off of a toy line, when it turns in a spin-off of a cool GTElevision series, developer Takara had plenty of opportunities. They could have based Beast Wars' polygonal models off the toys, thus ensuring that the transformation animations look smooth and realistic. They didn't. They could have used voices from the TV show, thus sparing us a cheesy voice actor. They didn't. Above all, they could have made a fun game that packs as much action as the series. They didn't. Instead, we have a mission-based adventure that mixes exploration and shoot-'em-up elements but ends up being dull and repetitive. The lackluster terrain is one pro em. Much of each stage looks the same, making it easy to get lost. Controls' no picnic either. I died more than a few times after missing what should have been a simple jump over an instant-death chasm. **Beast Wars** even takes the fun out of being a Transformer. You can't attack a mine in Beast Mode which you must change into occasionally to avoid damage from radiaction (environmentals). And while the game promises 24 missions, 12 for the Maximals, 12 for the Predacons, the level layouts and enemies are nearly identical for both sides. Unless you're a fan of the series and want to take it to its stars into action, avoid this game.

Crispin

As a long time Transformer, I really wanted this game to bring the series to life for the most part. It's not too bad, but had a hard time getting into it. It doesn't scream Transformers, it mimics MechWarrior. I expected flashy explosions and a cool animation on rivaling the animated series, but got none of these things. The graphics animate poorly—a tech task for a polygonal game. Still, it's a good ride, just not great.

Sushi

The suit life for this one should've been less than Meets the Eye. Not to sound like an old fogey, but back in the day the Transformers name meant something! Now the boys are all goofy, and this game is a good example of that. The graphics, Beast Wars is a average, with a couple of neat effects, and the game play is below average at best. Just walk around, shoot some thing and basically get bored. A throw in

Shawn

Beast Wars is the perfect example of how not to do an action game. The action is similar to other action games, but the control is sloppy and aiming at enemies is more difficult than it should be. The game's graphics are nothing to shout about either, although the information on animations are kinda cool. With a little more attention to the gameplay, Beast Wars could have been a decent game. As it stands now, it's best to avoid it.

Chris

| VISUALS | SOUND | INGENUITY | REPLAY |
|---------|-------|-----------|--------|
| 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 |

COURIER CRISIS



Publisher: GT Interactive

Developer: New Level

Featured in: N/A

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: The Levels That Require Skill

Worst Feature: All The Other Levels

www.gtgames.com

Was close to giving Courier Crisis a score from the depths of hell. In the beginning, I really hated this game—the first half's utter boring, completely redundant and way too easy. I rubbed my hands together gleefully and thought to myself, "Boy, I can't wait to rip into this piece of @\$\$!" In Review Crew! The early rounds consist of nothing more than running through similar-looking levels, picking up packages in one area and taking them to another. No real press, no real challenge. But, just when I was about ready to give up any kind of hope for the game, I ran into a level 5 stage, a stage that I couldn't beat with the same lackluster effort the earlier stages required. From this point on, the game becomes a tad bit more fun. These later levels actually require you to perform bike tricks in order to finish them successfully. You simply won't have enough time to finish the tougher areas in a straightforward fashion. Too bad it takes so long to reach this point. I'm sure many people will get turned off too early. In the game's chance, Courier Crisis couldn't be scored a bit higher if the programmers would have toned down the frequency of annoying voices, and they definitely should've left out the Green Day wanna-be Generation Xish hoping-to-be-grunge music! Overall, CC is average.

Dan

Well, I like CC, but it has some problems. I just can't overlook. First, the graphics are rough and the frame rate is choppy. Is this a first-generation PS title? Next, the levels are out and out an interesting and challenging as well, but they can be really repetitive too. Also, the original music is pretty damned cool, but those sound effects make me seem like you're in a funhouse or something. It's average, but it's a decent first.

Shawn

I really enjoyed this game. I got to see a character create mass carnage in the wild streets of a futuristic city. Courier Crisis is much like what I picture a one-player, mission-oriented, Twisted Metal rip-off. The earlier missions are case walks once you learn the city's roads. It's a bit up until level 5, then you'll be required to not just learn, but master, the city. It tracks you haven't needed that. I should just point out a mission that's a bit of a mess.

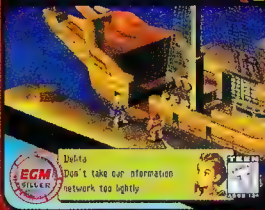
Sushi

This strategy boss between Road Rage and ESPN Xtreme Games is one of the most annoying games I've played in a while. I can't figure a way out of what makes the gameplay going from extremely easy to extremely hard in an instant. Controls can be a pain when it comes to performing tricks. And the graphics look straight out of a first-generation PlayStation title. Its corny sound effects get old quick.

Crispin

| VISUALS | SOUND | INGENUITY | REPLAY |
|---------|-------|-----------|--------|
| 5 | 6 | 6 | 6 |

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS



Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment

Developer: Square

Featured in: EGM #102

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: The Job/Ability System Rules

Worst Feature: Battlefields Could've Been Bigger

www.playstation.com

Final Fantasy Tactics is easily one of the best games I've ever played. It alone has made me a slave to the strategy/RPG game (Tactics Ogre is my next victim), and it has sucked away many, many hours of my time over the past few weeks. The game requires a lot of thought and planning (the game's Tutorial, as well as the manual, as well as a generous amount of patience, are a must), but the payoff and reward of tactically outwitting your opponents on the battlefield—with characters whose classes and abilities are straight from the final Fantasy universe—is a feeling I simply can't explain. The story's fantastic (written by the same man who did Tactics Ogre) and the soundtrack that goes along with it is, just phenomenal. I do have some complaints, but they are admittedly very minor. For one, the battles seem limited due to the 3D aspect of them (had they been less visually so ended, they could've taken place on larger battlefields with more troops, etc). And a big deal is that what should've been a lot of the game's NPCs that you come across during the game seem annoyed (they either sick-buff or they're total fakes). Otherwise, as long as you've got some patience and a lot of free time (you know me well over 40 hours to beat), you're going to love Final Fantasy Tactics. Just be warned—it isn't easy.

John

Just when I thought I escaped from the final Fantasy universe, this game came along and sucked me back in. FF Tactics is long and addicting and packs all the richness you'd expect from a Square game. Its combat isn't character-building systems are complex, at a level between Advanced Hearts and Tactics Ogre, but the game is still supremely easy to pick up and play. FF Tactics glides start slow, and doesn't expect much FFVIII quality FMV.

Crispin

Square's Tactics presents their game in a beautiful fashion: lush graphics, rich music, and a deep story. You almost can't help but enjoy playing them. FF Tactics is no exception. This very detailed strategy game had me hooked from the start. The best part of the game is gathered experience and customizing your troops. Going into battle after battle gets a little tiresome at times, but overall this is an experience strategy fans shouldn't miss.

Dan

As I say up front that strategy is best, I don't mind it. I enjoyed playing Tactics, but found it was hard to come back to after taking a long break. This is the kind of game that can consume you for hours on end, but when you stop playing for the day, you haven't really gotten that far. Graphics and music are just as stunning as Square's other recent efforts. While it carries the Final Fantasy name, it's a lot more involved than FFV.

Chris

| VISUALS | SOUND | INGENUITY | REPLAY |
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NBA IN THE ZONE '98



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Featured In: EGM #100

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Improved Realism

Worst Feature: Game Presentation

www.konami.com

The In the Zone, meant in the NBA in the Zone series shows definite signs that this basketball franchise is maturing. For the first time, ITZ feels like a real street basketball game in addition to being an entertaining one. Players move around court without the ball, set screens, picks and double team. It's as if brains have finally been transplanted into the ITZ players. Real plays, on-court play calling, and more elaborate strategic options (double team, press, etc.) have also been added, complementing ITZ's newfound intelligence. Also, the presentation of the game lends itself to be taken more seriously. All of the cheesy music and m.c.s (save the still annoying pastel FMV) have been revamped, giving the game a better look. The presentation isn't great, but it's a step in the right direction. The only things that have been relatively unchanged are the graphics and game control. ITZ '98 features excellent detailed polygons, players that control pretty well. Not everything was improved that needed to be, however. So one of the moves, particularly layups and shots off the glass, look a little funny and the game really needs icon passing. Also, we found errors with the game's rules, such as it not letting you rebound the ball backcourt from the sidelines. Even though these problems give a few rough edges, ITZ '98 is a quality game.

Kraig

Wasn't into the previous two In The Zone games for the PS, but ITZ '98 has made me a fan. The game is vastly improved over last year's version in many ways. The graphics are spectacular (though the net animation is weak—a very minor personal gripe), and the gameplay and overall AI are very good. My only problem is in the difficult, often more precise passing game. Two words, Konami: Icon Passing. Otherwise, very nice job.

John

I've never played the previous versions of In the Zone, but after hearing news that this game was more arcade action than simulation, I got excited. Sadly, the game is only slightly above average for a ball game. It's way too easy to steal balls and block shots in ITZ '98, plus the Instant Replay option doesn't always choose the right play to highlight. The game plays fast and fairly precise, but there's just not enough meat.

Kelly

My biggest pet peeve with most sports games is also my biggest problem with ITZ '98: It's way too easy to steal the ball. It's unrealistic and a bit frustrating when the ball is being turned over every other possession. ITZ '98 also has blocked shots...a little too much. This turns this otherwise excellent simulation of an arcade shoot-out into a game rather than a simulation. What you're looking for, then, check out ITZ '98.

Dan

POINT BLANK



Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Featured In: EGM #102

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Variety

Worst Feature: It's Too Much Fun

www.namco.com

This is it: the best light gun game I have ever played in my entire life. This isn't a light statement to make, especially when we have great games like Virtua Cop 2 or Time Crisis. What sets Point Blank apart from the rest is its wide variety and sheer simplicity. It's like having Duck Hunt, Letha, Enforcers, Wild Gunman and every other classic shooting game in one disc. Every min-game is very different from the next. For example, one stage gives you one bullet to shoot an apple off a person's head while another might give you unlimited ammo to type out words by shooting keys on an on-screen keyboard. This arcade perfect translation is more than enough for my full recommendation. Namco, however, is never happy with a straight arcade-to-home port. In a typical Namco move, the programmers have added much more to the PS version. We get an awesome eight-player Party Mode. We get a novel Quest Mode. We get extra home-exclusive stages. For the PS fan like me, it's almost too much. I can talk your ears off telling you how much fun this game is, but you won't truly appreciate it until you sit down and play it a few times. It's one of those "bits of games" that will suck in gamers and non-gamers alike. If you don't get the idea by now, check out Point Blank!

Dan

Gun games just don't get any better than this. It's one of the most fun, addictive, and long-lasting one- or two-player games out there. If you've never played Point Blank in the arcade, buy it immediately. Its variety and sheer number of stages will keep you shooting silly smiles for months. And even if you've played the arcade game to death, buy it anyway. As usual, Namco has added the home version with extras.

Crispin

For those of you who picked up Time Crisis 4, it's the GunCon, add another "must-buy" to your list. Point Blank is one of those titles you'd be silly not to have in your gaming library. I don't for the fun one-player Modes. The regular arcade game and especially the added Quest Mode, then for the awesome two-player and four-player Modes. BTW, if you don't already have the GunCon's worth nothing for Point Blank alone.

Shawn

Thank God. I've spent WAY too much money on this game in the arcade already. Point Blank is my favorite light gun game EVER. It's SO much fun, and there's SO much variety that I'll keep you entertained for weeks. Add to that several home-exclusive modes. I'll check out the Wacky Quest Mode, and you have the most enjoyable, well-rounded light gun game imaginable. Play it against a friend, it's an absolute blast. GREAT game.

John

RESIDENT EVIL 2



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: EGM #102

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: The Horror And Suspense

Worst Feature: Sometimes Awkward Control

www.capcom.com

All I can say is "WOW." Resident Evil 2 is everything I could want in a sequel. I admit that I thought the first RE was a little overrated. Sure, it was scary and presented some interesting features, but it left me wanting more. Well, Capcom has given me all I could ask for with RE2. Everything from the awesome graphics to the layout of the game is flawless. In addition, absolutely love the integrated, rendered FMV. Gone are the days of cheesy actors and horrible dialogue. Now we have incredible rendered sequences with above-average voice-overs. But that's just part of the excitement. When you're walking around in the game, numbers of zombies and other downright disturbing beasts come at you from every angle, and then pop up. Last when you thought they were dead. On top of this, the detail of practically everything in the game is perfect. The pre-rendered backgrounds coupled with eerie music and sound effects make you feel like you're in a horror flick—a step up from a B movie even. With this up there though, not one ounce of that "Resident Evil" feel is lost. If anything, the enhanced PS2 version gives you that much more of that feeling. The most memorable scene for me is when you're confronted by a giant reptile. Let's just say you'll need a pair of Lindberghs on hand.

Shawn

If any software developer wants to see how a sequel should be done, they should look at this game. I didn't like the first RE, but I absolutely adore this one. Just about every major problem in the first game has been corrected—save the fact that it's still hard to see objects in ammo rooms. The graphics and game play are excellent, and a masterful job was done to create the ominous and frightful mood of the game. A must have.

Kraig

I was not a big fan of the first Resident Evil, but RE2 is everything the first game should've been and more. The cinematics are great, and the story is very interesting and super weird, and the scare factor is unbelievably high (Shove your scream like a grill, the controls still a bit annoying, but it's improved, and the whole atmosphere more than makes up for it. Being able to play from both sides of the story (Leon and Claire) rocks. "Re-demption."

John

Even though I surprised this review, one who wasn't that wild about the original. It sucks, yes. In with its excellent graphics and creepy atmosphere, it played it for hours before realizing it was almost time for me to go to work...the next morning. This game is so infuriatingly intense. The menu system still sucks, but everything else is just about perfect. This may just be the nearest contender for PlayStation Game of the Year.

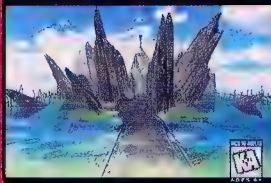
Dan

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VISUALS 5 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 9 REPLAY 10

VISUALS 9 SOUND 9 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 6

RIVEN



Publisher: Acclaim

Developer: Cyan

Featured In: EGM #103

I've never been a big fan of graphic adventures so I really wasn't expecting much from Riven. Now a though playing Riven hasn't convinced me to evangelize graphic adventures, there is a lot more to like here than in its prequel, Myst. The environments are very moody with excellent music. And compared to Myst, there is a lot more interaction in Riven. Now I know that isn't saying much, but given a chance, it's easy to see this game is miles ahead of Myst. Riven is a game that must be appreciated for what it is, or not be appreciated at all. Being a gamer who cut his teeth on action games, Riven had a weird effect on me. The pace and therapeutic aura of the game is quite relaxing but the sheer vastness of the game is overwhelming at times. Riven's one of the most challenging games I've played in a long time, because you only get the most subtle hints of what to do, so you are forced to explore. Yet another odd effect this game had on me is that it can be so difficult to know what to do that when you do get something right, it encourages you to go one step further. I can't overstate it. I'm saying this, but I actually recommend Riven. A good game is a good game and Riven falls (or rather soars) into that category. It's not for everyone, but if you're even mildly interested, give it a try.

Kelly

By far this is the longest game to complete, Riven takes a massive amount of patience (and as a result, replacement controllers, to finish. You'll be as entranced by the wonderful backdrops as you are disgusted by the poor acting. The plotline draws heavily upon Myst, so it's fairly meaty for those players. It makes no pretense of being its own game. I promise you, if you find yourself totally immersed or totally frustrated.

Sushi

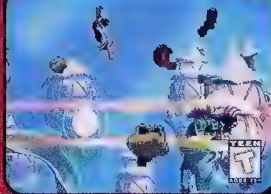
Riven delivers what Myst fans want: more of the same. If you don't mind thumbing through five CDs of still shots to solve some challenging puzzles, then this game is for you. The art is well-rendered, creating a very visual world to explore. One of Riven's biggest improvements over Myst is that there is more audio, and moving parts when you click on things on screen. This isn't my sort of game, but those who like Myst will definitely enjoy it.

Kraig

There's two ways to approach Riven. The first is to pawn it off as another boring Myst-style game and pass it by. The other is to be open-minded and see what this five-disc wonder is all about. If you go with the latter, Riven may be a mundane style of play, but there's a lot more to this sequel than you may think (in both story line and puzzles). On top of this, the overall design and graphic detail of the game is really nice. Give it a try.

Shawn

SKULLMONKEYS



Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: The Neverhood

Featured In: EGM #101

The PS needs more games like this. Take all the weirdness and coolness of Oddworld, add lots of clay and loads of uniqueness, and what you get is Skullmonkeys. Not only does SM give you characters that you can't help but love, an original soundtrack that'll make you dance around and cool looking levels, it also presents a genuinely solid game. This is easily one of the best side-scrollers to hit the PlayStation in a long time. The attention to detail, and continuity of style in SM makes me wonder just how many hours the development team spent on the project - I must've been a very long process. Animation wise, the game comes through again. And to think, they did all of it with clay! On top of the game play, the various cutscenes with original, claymated FMV are brilliant. It's been a long time since I've laughed this hard at a game. With all of these good things, come the bad. Really, the only gripe I have is that it's too easy for your character to die. I don't mind a challenge, but I also wouldn't like the hole to allow a few extra hits instead of one. Other than that, the game is great. Skullmonkeys is one of those titles I'd recommend to check out even if you're not all that curious. Being a guy who likes to draw and create, Skullmonkeys really gets those creative juices flowing, so to speak.

Shawn

Skullmonkeys gets the first Susm X-rated Award for Must Bust-A-Gut Humor in a Game. You can smell the taint of Earthworm Jim throughout, but it's so much more... gross. I challenge anyone to listen to the entire bonus room music without laughing out loud. It can't be done. I'm serious. Besides the humor, the challenge is a very tough for veteran gamers, so don't relax too much. Here's a hot game with few problems.

Sushi

I guess the notable thing about this game is supposed to be the characters animated through claymation. Really, it's no big deal - the characters look no better than any other spillo-besed, 3-D platform game. As a platformer, Skullmonkeys is above average. The gameplay is fun, and the scenery diverse, but there are no great bosses or wide variety of enemies. This is the type of game that is good enough to rent, but not buy.

Kraig

Skullmonkeys is one of the most delightfully twisted games I've played in a long time. As far as gameplay is concerned, SM is a hard-core platform game with intense line jumps and heart-pumping action. The best part of Skullmonkeys, however, is its over-the-top humor and grossness. I laughed aloud several times during play. As an action game, SM is great, but its style and humor take the cake. This one is a complete surprise.

Kelly

X-MEN: COTA



Publisher: Acclaim

Developer: Probe

Featured In: N/A

As if I needed any further proof that Capcom's 2-D fighters are not well-suited for the PlayStation, along comes X-Men: Children of the Atom to further solidify my theories. First, the standard PS pad takes about half the fun of X-Men away from me. The lack of a S/X-button configuration on the PS pad is not as annoying as the D pad itself: it's harder than it should be to perform fireball motions. Considering how popular Capcom's six button configured fighters are today, it's amazing that they aren't more Saturn-style, six-button pads for the PS, but if you can find one, I recommend it. But I digress, the control issue is just the prelude to my main gripe: animation. Although X-Men: COTA does control well, much of the animation frames seen in the arcade game are nowhere to be found. It's gives the game a jerky look and feel that is awkward at times and downright annoying at others. At least, it is to anal Capcom fighting game fans such as myself. I know I'm not supposed to mention the "S" word in this review but in truth, it's hard to get excited over an animated game like X-Men for the PS, when the aged Saturn version is so much better. For PS owners X-Men is OK, but if you're a Capcom fan, dual system ownership never sounds so appealing. Besides, X-Men vs. SF EX Edition is almost here.

Kelly

This is a bit late, don't you think? After all, we have Marvel Super Heroes, a game that's leagues better than the archaic COTA. To make matters worse, this is not a good port. The game has a lot of slowdown and choppy animation, especially for handling such small characters (the backgrounds are excellent, however). This is a commendable effort, but Acclaim shouldn't have bothered. This is just a sub-par port of a very old game.

Dan

After such a long time coming, it's no surprise that "I'm not horribly impressed. The sad thing is that with all the delays, you'd think you'd get an arcade-perfect translation. Not exactly. The animation is a naphazars and even the sound isn't all that hot. The pure size of the game must've been too much for the game's programers. It's hard to describe, but the game feels "compressed." Too bad quality wasn't a top priority.

Sushi

Surprise! After months of delays, look what Finally showed up on our doorstep. Well, much to my dismay, I wish I never opened the door. Probe managed to finish the word Capcom started, but the final product isn't even up to the standards of the PS Darkstalkers, let alone the recently released (and very nice, MSH. Tons of slowdown, no Survival or Group Battle Modes and...lots more slowdown. Save your pennies and wait for X-Men vs. SF EX.

John

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VISUALS 8 SOUND 8 GENIUS 7 REPLAY 7

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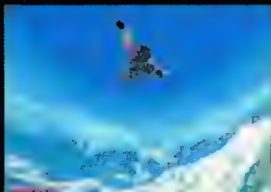
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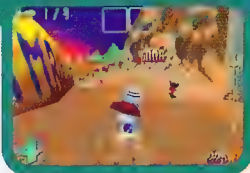


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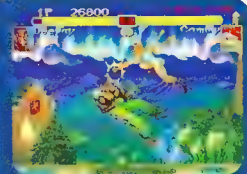
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- 5 FIFA: Road to Paris**
- 6 Fighter's Destiny**
- 7 Bomberman 64**
- 8 Mario Kart 64**
- 9 Earthworm Jim**
- 10 Dark Forces 64**



HOW TO READ THE TOP 10 CHART

- 5** **GoldenEye 007**
- ↑ Ed tor's Choice Award ↑
- # Consecutive Months On The Chart
- Rank Number



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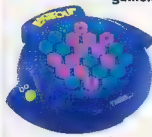
WIN PRIZES!

Winning is really fun! To play, just enter our contest area and answer a series of cool and easy video game trivia questions!

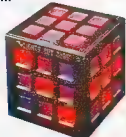
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KONAMI XXL SPORTS SERIES™

I've jumped 40-foot gaps.
'Coptered into virgin chutes.
But now, I'm not riding for kicks.
I'm riding for gold, in Nagano.
And you're cutting
my groove.
Shred it.



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JUMP START

Resident Evil 2

By the EGM® Staff

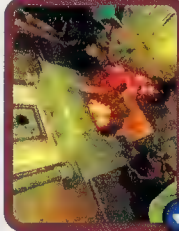
Warning: Pages Contain Game Spoilers. Read with Caution!

Although it's a little easier than the original Resident Evil, the sequel offers more replay value and twists than the first one did. This time, the two main characters to play as (Leon and Claire) have alternative characters that the player controls at some point. Leon runs into a mysterious woman, Ada, while Claire meets

Sherry, the daughter of an Umbrella scientist.

This Jump Start tackles some of the game's tougher puzzles.

A final note: This strategy was done with a reviewable but not final version of the game, so there may be changes.



1

1. The First Red Jewel: Find the first one above a fireplace behind the briefcase room, on the northwest side of the Police Department's first floor.

Light the fireplace with the lighter to burn the picture above, (Leon can do this right away). **2. The Second Red Jewel:** Find it in the hallway in the northwest area of the Police Department's second floor. You'll need to slide two statues into the right spots on the floor. **3. Use Both Jewels:** After you put out the chopper fire, you'll be able to go into a room on the second floor—use the jewels on two small busts inside.

1

What Are Those Red Jewels For?



2

Can I Blow Up the Chopper?



Gamers playing Claire might forget about the chopper after they put out the fire, but the chopper blocks the entrance to the Chief's room. Claire will need two items to blow up the wreckage found at a second-floor hallway. Claire gets **plastic explosives** in the evidence room on the Police Department's first floor. She finds the **detonator** in the police staff locker room on the first floor after meeting the wounded-cop-turned-zombie.

Claire vs. Leon

Although Claire has access to stronger weapons, she has more puzzles to solve (namely near the end). She starts off with the **lockpick**, which gives her easy access to desks and rooms. It seems she takes no damage per hit compared to Leon.



For Her: More Puzzles

Each may have a cooler story line, but in more straightforward. His weapons may not be as powerful as Claire's, but they're more than adequate—but only if he can find the weapon pants upgrades! He starts the game with the lighter.

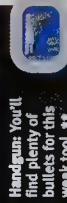


For Him: Tougher Fight

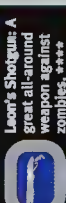
See EGM® Issues 44 & 45 for the first-ever walk-through!

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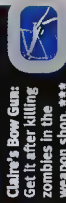
Weapon Ratings



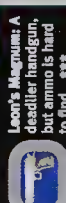
Handgun: You'll find plenty of bullets for this weak tool. **



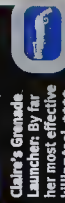
Leon's Shotgun: A great all-around weapon against zombies. ****



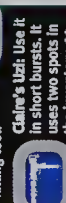
Claire's Bow Gun: Get it after killing zombies in the weapon shop. ***



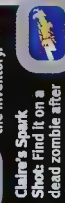
Leon's Magnum: A decelerator handgun, but ammo is hard to find. ***



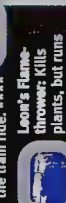
Claire's Grenade Launcher: By far her most effective killing tool. ****



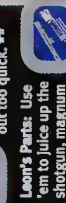
Claire's Uzi: Use it in short bursts. It uses two spots in the inventory. **



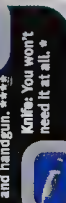
Claire's Spark Shot: Find it on a dead zombie after the train ride. ****



Leon's Flamethrower: Kills plants, but runs out too quick. **



Leon's Parts: Use 'em to juice up the shotgun, magnum and handgun. ***



Knife: You won't need it at all. *



How Do I Save Sherry?

Boss 1: Step back and use heavy firepower on him. Kill the vermin he spits out, or else they'll stop you from shooting.

Boss 2: Take one shot from afar, then run away in a circle around the train. Don't get close!

How Best to Kill Bosses?

The route to the trolley lies in the northwest corner of Sewers B-2 behind a waterfall. A machine nearby shuts the water supply, but you'll need the silver wolf medal and the gold eagle medal. Find the gold item on the Sewer B-1 level. Leon finds the silver medal in a corner on the east side of Level B-2, near the big exhaust fan tunnel, while Claire finds it in the trash where the crocodile was.

After getting the serum instructions from Annette, go to the room in the southeast corner of Level 4, Laboratory. Get the vaccine cartridge; use it on the computer to the right to make the serum canister. Head downstairs to Level 5 to the lab (where the lab key was found). Use the canister on the computer in one corner to make the serum—it'll save Sherry's life!

So What's Left?



Help Me Leave the Sewers!

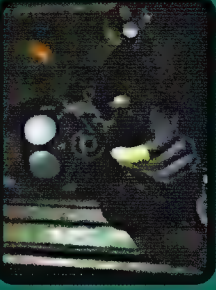
4



5



CONGRATULATIONS!!
RANKING: CLEAR GAME
TOTAL TIME: 04:12:02
NUMBER OF SAVES: 10



Without going away too much, the story takes to beat the game may be a factor in the type of ending you receive—much like the first Resident Evil. It might even trigger a "secret bonus" game that stars a brand-new character! (Hint: Remember the soldiers from Umbrella? Beating the game without using powerful weapons may show some effect on the ending as well.)

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It's All You Need to Know



Tricks of the Trade

Trickman Terry needs the all the luck he can get!

Well, Trickman Terry's little dog finally has a name: Mooka, because she looks like a cross between a moo cow and a small dog (thanks to all you readers who sent in potential names). With proper training, she's becoming a great companion for the Trickmeister. Now if we could only train Terry as easily.... It looks like the luck of the Irish rubbed off on the Trickman this month (at least on his hair). Trickman decided to be festive for St. Patrick's Day by coloring his hair green, and even though he's getting strange looks around the office, Terry is doing his best to ignore the snotty comments and concentrate on making the best Tricks section ever better! You can help by sending in the best of your newest tricks, codes and cheats to:

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Win Games and Accessories for your Tricks!



If your trick is selected as the Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by the kind people at intertek! If you are given credit for submitting a not trick in this section, you will win a free game. Gaze at the tiny text below so you can get all the details on the free stuff.

NOTE: If you send your trick by e-mail, you must include your real name, address, city, state and zip code.

Contest Rules

1. **Winning Trick:** The winning trick is the one that is most creative, most useful, and most fun. It must be a trick that is not already in the magazine. It must be a trick that is not already in the magazine. It must be a trick that is not already in the magazine.

2. **Prizes:** The winning trick will win a free GameShark provided by the kind people at intertek! If you are given credit for submitting a not trick in this section, you will win a free game. Gaze at the tiny text below so you can get all the details on the free stuff.

3. **Eligibility:** The winning trick must be a trick that is not already in the magazine. It must be a trick that is not already in the magazine. It must be a trick that is not already in the magazine.

4. **Submission:** The winning trick must be a trick that is not already in the magazine. It must be a trick that is not already in the magazine. It must be a trick that is not already in the magazine.

5. **Winning Trick:** The winning trick is the one that is most creative, most useful, and most fun. It must be a trick that is not already in the magazine. It must be a trick that is not already in the magazine.

Trick of the Month

Dragon Ball GT: Final Bout

SECRET CHARACTER

At the Title Screen, do the six-character code (Right, Left, Down, Up, Right, Left, Down, Up) and you will hear a sound, then press Triangle 10 times and then Square nine times. You will hear another sound to confirm that it worked correctly. You will see Super Saiyan 4 Goku on the Menu Screen. On the Player Select Screen, he will be a selectable character in the lower-middle section of the screen!



On the Title Screen, do the six-character code plus the new one.



Super Saiyan 4 Goku will now be added to your playable characters!

Joel Samson
Santa Clara, CA



Robotron 64

LEVEL SKIP, 50 LIVES, GAME BOY MODE, POWER-UPS, ETC.

These codes are to be done quickly in the Setup Screen. You will hear a sound if they were done correctly:

Level Select: Down, Up, Left-C, Down, Left-C, Right-C, Down, Right-C.
50 Lives: Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left-C, Left-C, Right-C.
Game Boy Mode: Up, Down, Right.

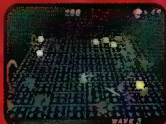
Left-C, Down, Up, Left, Right-C, Up, Down, Auto Play: Left, Right, Up, Down, Left-C, Right-C, Left-C, Right-C, Left, Right, Up, Down, Left-C, Right-C, Left-C, Right-C, Left, Right, Up, Down, Left-C, Right-C, Left-C, Right-C.

Within the game, enter these power-up codes with a combination of the D-pad and the C buttons:

Two Way: Up, Up-C, Up, Up-C.
Three Way: Right, Right, Left-C, Down-C.
Four Way: Down, Down, Up, Right-C.
Shield: Down, Left, Left-C, Right-C.
Flame Thrower: Down, Right, Down, Right-C.
Speed Up: Left, Left, Right, Right, Up, Up.
Radiation Spray: Up, Down, Right-C, Left-C.



In the Setup Screen, do the code to choose your starting level.



With a multitude of levels, an extra 50 lives won't hurt.



While playing the game, enter any of the power-up codes.



Put in Game Boy Mode for black-and-white mayhem!

Cart World Series

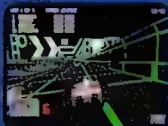
SPECIAL PASSWORD CHEATS

These cheats will get you some special-looking tracks and strange options for your car. On the Type Screen, choose a race (Single Race or New Season) and on the Select Driver Screen, move Left until you see "Create Driver." Now enter one of the passwords as shown to get the following results:

NIGHTRID - Drive at night.
SPACERID - Tron-like tracks.
GEK - You will race two laps in Season Mode.



Go to the Create Driver Screen and enter one of the passwords.



One of the codes (Spacerid) will let you drive on a future track.

WHEELS - There will be no body on your car.
FLOAT - Tracks will have half the normal gravity (you will have less traction than normal races).
RADBRAD - Tracks have more gravity than normal.
BAMZAI - You won't collide with any other cars.

Duke Nukem 64

LEVEL SELECT

The missing piece to the Cheats Menu has finally been filled in. This trick will give you a Level Select for the game. Enter the main cheat code at the Title/Menu

Screen (Left, Left, L button, L button, Right, Right, Left, Left). Now enter the Level Skip code: L button, L button, L button, Right-C, Right, Left, Left, Left-C.



On the Title/Menu Screen enter the main cheat and then the Level Skip.



In the Cheats Menu, you'll see that you can go to any level.

Street Fighter Collection



The Street Fighter Collection is a compilation of the first three Street Fighter games. It includes all the characters and moves from the original games. The collection is available on the PlayStation 2 and the Game Boy Advance. It is a great way to relive the classic Street Fighter experience.



Supports 2D in the PlayStation 2 version and 3D in the Game Boy Advance version.

Only the first three games are included in the collection.

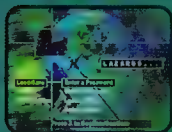
Nuclear Strike

PASSWORD CHEAT

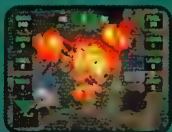
To get these cheats to work, you must go to the Main Menu and at the Load/Save option, choose "Enter a Password." Put in any of these for various results:
LAZARUS - Infinite Lives.
LIGHTNING - Secret Bonus Level.
EAGLEEYE - No one can shoot your weapons.
WARDRIVE - Faster vehicles.
WARRIOR - You get five extra attempts.
PHOENIX - You get four extra attempts.
MPG - No sound from your weapon.



Michael McCreary, Kariel Anderson, CA



In the main menu, go to the Load/Save option and enter one of the passwords at this screen.



Now you will see a bonus level when you enter the Level Skip code.

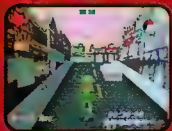
Courier Crisis



PLAY AS AN ALIEN OR A GORILLA

Choose the Memory Card icon from the Main Menu and then access the Load/Save Options. Move over to Password and enter one of these codes under "Enter Password" to play as two strange, new couriers.

Play as the Alien - Put in the name XFTYONEX.
Play as the Gorilla - Put in the name SAVAGEAPE.



Enter the code for the Alien and you will be able to play as your alien courier.



As a Gorilla, you can see your alien courier's position.

Sonic R



ALL WEAPONS

On the title screen of Sonic R, just start moving the D-pad in all directions and press X, Y, A, or B to change the colors of the R. This shouldn't give any advantage.

With game, hit the R button 15 times.

Accesses the Main Menu Screen.

Aerofighters Assault

EXTRA PILOTS AND PLANES

These codes will give you a couple of new pilots and some new planes. Some of them must be earned while others are codes.

Enable Spanky: To get him, you must complete all three bonus missions.

New planes in deathmatch: For each mission you complete you will get a new plane.

Extra Pilot and plane: At the Title Screen, not the Main Menu Screen, press Left-C.



Enter the code at the Title Screen for the new pilot and plane.

Down-C, Right-C, Up-C, Left-C, Right-C, Down-C. Then check in the Plane Select Screen on the far left.



One



ALL WEAPONS AND STAGE SELECT

At the Main Menu Screen, move over and choose the "Load Game" Option. Then pick "Enter Password." Put in one or both of these codes for the results as shown.

MAXPOWER - Gives you access to all the weapons. **HEVYFEET** - Opens up the Stage Select Screen where you can choose to start from any of the six levels.



In the Load Game Screen, enter one of the passwords as shown.



The Stage Select Option will appear after entering HEVYFEET.

Last Bronx



MANY HIDDEN CODES

This game has many secrets to it. One secret is the Special Difficulty Levels. Once you have opened the door of your Saturn and started the game 15 times, you will be rewarded with three new difficulty settings: Defense, Berserk and Judo.

Portraits. There are three sets of portraits for each character. Obtaining these portraits will open up other cheats. In order to get them you must play through difficulty levels Normal, Hard and Arcade. You must play through each level without losing to a single fighter.

Joke Weapons. Once you obtain all three portraits for a character you will be able to get the weapon for that character. The column that your character is in is the direction that you must press and hold. For example, for Joe press and hold right on the D-pad.

Movies. If you enter into Saturn Mode and play through you will be rewarded with a movie of your character and his archenemy. Press the A or C buttons to watch the movie and the B button at any time to return to the Movie Viewing Screen.



At this point turn the machine off and on 15 times.



You will then be rewarded with three new difficulty levels.

Duke Nukem 3D

ALL WEAPONS, GOD MODE

To enter a kind of Debug Mode where you can enter in some cheat codes to affect play, you must press and hold X, Y and Z for about 10 seconds at the Main Menu Screen. If you held it long enough, you will see "Input Info on" appear on the bottom of the screen. Once that code is entered press-pause while in game and hit these keys for special modes.

All Weapons: X X X X X X X X
God Mode: X X X X X X X X



hold X-Y-Z for 10 seconds at this screen to start the code.



Put God Mode on to easily get through any of the levels.

Monster Rancher



BUILD UP LOYALTY METER

Here is an easy way to build up your loyalty meter. Once you have your monster, take it back and forth between the ranch and the town. Each time you do this, your loyalty meter goes up five points! However, you must use this in moderation. The more you do this trick, the stricter your style will become. Your monster will have a tendency to run away and destroy its home if your style gets overbearing, so be warned!



Go back and forth between the ranch and the town for a while.



Your loyalty will be very high, but your style suffers.

Trickman's Reference Guide



This guide is a reference to all of the game codes printed within the last six months of EGM. Note: This does not include GameShark codes or any other codes that use a peripheral attachment. Look for the update in next month's Tricks of the Trade.

| Issue #98 | | | Issue #99 | | | Issue #100 | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|----------------------------|------------|----------------------------|-----|-------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|
| Codename Tenka | PS | Test Drive: Off-Road | PS | B. A. Tushinden 3 | PS | NHL '97 | PS | Battle Monsters | SAT | NBA HangTime | PS |
| Daytona USA CCE | SAT | Thunder Truck Rally | PS | Broken Heix | PS | Peak Performance | PS | Carnage Heart | PS | NCAA Football '98 | PS |
| Die Hard Trilogy | PS | TNN Hardcore 4X4 | PS | Cool Boarders | PS | Pitbull | PS | The Crow | PS | NFL GameDay '98 | PS |
| Hexen | N64 | Trova 2 | PS | Darklight Conflict | PS | Star Wars: Solt | N64 | Excalibur 2555 A.D | PS | Ogre Battle | PS |
| Machine Head | PS | Twisted Metal 2 | PS | Dark Ridd | N64 | S.F. EX-Alpha | SAT | Goldenteye 007 | N64 | Pandemonium! | SAT |
| Magic Carpet | SAT | War Goats | N64 | Dynasty Warriors | PS | Three Dirty Dwarves | SAT | Hero's Adventures | PS | Street Fighter EX-Alpha | PS |
| PS Underground No. 2 | PS | Wild Arms | PS | Jet Moto | PS | Triple Play '98 | PS | Ki: The Arena Fighters | PS | Tetrisphere | N64 |
| Robotron X | PS | | | K-1: The Arena Fighters | PS | Turok: Dinosaur Hunter | N64 | Machine Hunter | PS | Warcraft II: The Dark Saga | PS |
| Star Wars: Solt | N64 | | | Namco Museum Vol. 4 | PS | Xenious 3D/G+ | PS | Marvel Super Heroes | SAT | | |
| Ten Pin Alley | PS | | | NBA Hangtime | SNE | | | Monte Kombat Trilogy | SAT | | |
| Issue #101 | | | Issue #102 | | | Issue #103 | | | | | |
| Excalibur 2555 A.D. | PS | Triple Play '98 | PS | Guilty Fighter 63 1/3 | N64 | PlayStation Underground No. 3 | PS | Colony Wars | PS | Test Drive 4 | PS |
| Fantastic Four | PS | Warcraft II: The Dark Saga | PS | Dragon Ball GT: Final Bout | PS | Street Fighter EX + Alpha | PS | Duke Nukem 64 | N64 | Time Crisis | PS |
| Lost World: Jurassic Park 2 | PS | | | Extreme-G | N64 | Super Mario 64 | N64 | Fighting Force | PS | Tomb Raider 2 | PS |
| Marx TT | SAT | | | Final Fantasy VII | PS | Triple Play '98 | PS | Final Fantasy V.I | PS | | |
| Mortal Kombat Trilogy | SAT | | | Famula LEE | PS | | | Frogger | PS | | |
| NFL GameDay '98 | PS | | | Mace: The Dark Age | N64 | | | G-Police | PS | | |
| NHL '97 | SAT | | | Marvel Super Heroes | PS | | | Monster Rancher | PS | | |
| NHL Powerplay '98 | PS | | | NFL Quarterback Club '98 | N64 | | | Moto Racer | PS | | |
| Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee | PS | | | Nightmare Creatures | PS | | | PlayStation Underground No. 4 | PS | | |
| Tetrisphere | N64 | | | Pandemonium 2 | PS | | | Star Wars: MoTK | PS | | |

NBA Live '98



EASTER EGG CODES

To enable the Easter Egg codes, begin a regular game (Exhibition, etc.), and after choosing your teams, go to the User Setup Screen. Choose "Start New" and enter the name: **Secrets**. Press Start to confirm the name then press the Circle button to activate the Secrets Menu. To enter the codes, go to Secrets Menu and highlight "Enter Secret Code" and press the X button. Now, enter the following codes—they are case sensitive, so enter them exactly as shown:

- Seaweed** (Underwater court)
- Scary** (Home team in Halloween costumes)
- Freaky** (Away team in Halloween costumes)
- Cloak home** (Home team selected player is invisible)
- Cloak away** (Away team selected player is invisible)
- Eyepatch** (Create player with eyepatch)
- Monocle** (Create player with monocle)
- Toque** (Create player EA Toque)
- Prisoners** (Hitmen be free)
- Lizard** (Chameleon Home Team)
- Reptile** (Chameleon Away Team)

Sam Perez
Sunnyvale, CA

Wayne Gretzky '98



ENTER THE NAME SECRETS

After starting a new game, go to the User Setup screen. Enter the name: **Secrets**. Press the Start button to confirm the name. Then press the Circle button to activate the Secrets Menu. To enter the codes, go to the Secrets Menu and highlight "Enter Secret Code". Press the X button to enter the code. The codes are case sensitive, so enter them exactly as shown:



After starting a new player, enter the name: **Secrets**.



Enter the codes here. Some of them have multiple options.



Turn on many of the codes at once for a very bizarre game!

Get Some!

Cool stuff you could probably live without, but shouldn't

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Feel the Force in Your Pocket

Have you ever wondered how practically everyone in the *Star Wars* universe seems to know how to pilot any ship or craft with no prior experience? And how none of those crafts have ignition keys? Fortunately for those of us in *this* universe who need keys, Tiger Toys offers lots of inexpensive key chains based on *Star Wars*. These tiny model replicas sport features like lights, sound effects and movie dialog snippets. Look for the Death Star, R2-D2, Millennium Falcon and stormtrooper, among others. By the way, isn't it weird how you always find lost keys in the last place you look?

Price \$9-15

For More Information www.tigertoys.com

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Retro Wildlife

All you hipsters out there be prepared to embrace the ultimate in retro wildlife collecting, the massive T-Rex. This dino is no wimpy 5-inch miniature like the ones we've seen in every toy, game and science store on the planet. No sir, this bad-boy T-Rex is the ultimate in prehistoric carnivore replication. Standing 4 1/2-feet high, 3-feet wide and a whopping 8-feet long, this highly detailed, hand-painted fiberglass replica is sure to scare the crap out of anyone who breaks into your house late at night. The dino's also a useful tool when trying to impress dates, friends and co-workers.

Price \$5,995

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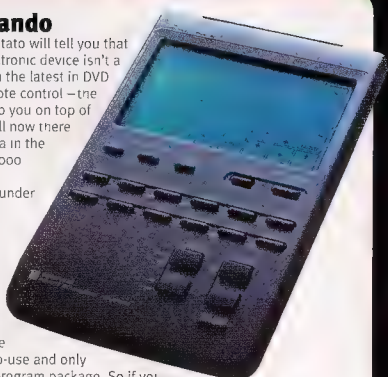




Couch Commando

Any dedicated couch potato will tell you that the most important electronic device isn't a big TV, hi-fi VCR or even the latest in DVD technology. It's the remote control—the surfboard meant to keep you on top of the electronic wave. Well now there is a new reigning kanu in the pack. The Sony RM AV2000 "Integrated Remote Commander." Don't misunderstand, this is not your father's remote control. With an awesome blue backlit touch screen, built-in codes for most popular A/V devices and learning capabilities, the AV2000 will control up to 12 separate devices, all in an easy-to-use and only moderately difficult-to-program package. So if you are a med-a freak with a TV, DSS, DVD, Laserdisc Player, CD and three VCRs, look no further. Finally there is a solution for you that does not involve years of therapy. Just sit back and surf away.

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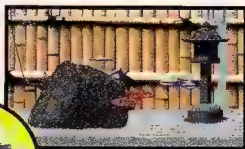
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Go Fish

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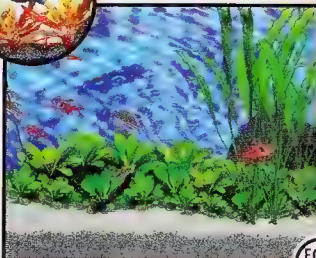
Price \$30
For More Information www.aquazone.com
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Oh Lookie, a Wookiee

Considering the mass appeal of Beanie Babies, cute little Star Wars Buddies are a good marketing idea. The only drawback for fans, however, will be the resurgence of the old debate over Ewoks ruining a perfectly good Star Wars trilogy. But these guys are good gifts to entice stubborn girlfriends into liking Star Wars, so we say OK.

Price \$7 each
For More Information www.hasbro.com



Op:ed

by Ed Semrad
ed_semrad@zd.com

EGM's own gaming guru shoots from the hip

The hard part is not making the same mistake the next time. This is the part that Sega can't get right.

Now that the holiday season is over and game companies are starting to make plans for Christmas 1998, the big question is: What is Sega going to do?

The future of the Saturn as a long term game platform has been in doubt for some time. With virtually no third-party software developers, only a couple of new games coming from Sega, and the word out on all the specs of their new game system, the Saturn appears to be only a few months away from the dusty bargain bins at Toys 'R' Us.

Why? What did Sega do wrong and what can Sega learn from this?

Hindsight always comes easy, but the hard part is not making the same mistake the next time. This is the part that Sega can't get right. Whether it's the Sega CD and its bad attempt at FMV games; the 32X and its incomplete development kits; or the Saturn with its quickly assembled hardware, bad development support and a rushed, poorly planned launch, Sega just can't seem to get it all together.

What should they do the next time? First, Sega needs a management team that knows something about video games and the industry. No matter how good a product is, if the execs can't guide its development, it will never succeed.

Second, Sega of America needs to convince Sega of Japan that the U.S. is a completely different market. What may work in Japan may not necessarily (and probably won't) work in the States.

Third, along with the separation of SoA and Sol, SoA needs a "blank check" with no strings attached from Japan. Trying to launch a new system with Sony and Nintendo dominating the market will not

come easy or cheap.

Fourth, besides having software support from Japan, SoA needs to have stateside development teams. While the Japanese are masters at game development, there are genres that need the "American touch." Sports games are one of these genres, and without a strong football, hockey and basketball game, any new game system will be severely handicapped. Another Sega Studios, properly managed, would be a necessity.

Fifth, SoA needs strong third-party support. Not just a few "one-shot backyard developers"; Sega needs commitments from the big guns like Capcom, EA, Konami, Midway and Shiny.

Sixth, also from the companies above, Sega needs exclusive, big-name games - titles you can't get on any other system. It is going to take a lot to convince players who already have a PlayStation or N64 that they have to buy yet another system. This won't be cheap, so Sega better have deep pockets.

Seventh, the new system can't be too expensive. A price greater than \$299 is going to be a hard sell with the competition getting ready to hit the \$100 price point.

Eighth, SoA needs the best marketing and advertising teams in the business. Remember the "Segal" TV ads? Or the "square color" Game Gear vs. Game Boy TV commercials? These got people talking...and buying the product. Sega hasn't had good marketing since the Al Nilsen and Pam Kelly days.

Finally, Sega needs a proper launch of its new system. No surprise quick launch, no ridiculous price and enough great software to get players to believe in Sega again.

Can they do it? Will they do it? Or do they even want to do it again? It's up to you, Sega.



What does the future hold for Sonic the Hedgehog?

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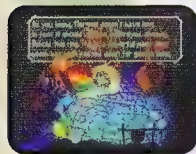
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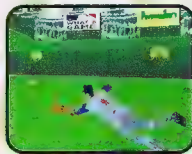
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Next Month



The number of RPGs in the last year has surged. Find out which ones are worthwhile and why.



ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

April 1998

1999 Opening Day is almost here, and like clockwork, so is Sony's MLB 99.



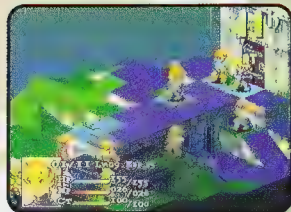
At long last, Tekken 3 is coming to the PlayStation. Look for our full blowout coverage on this fighter.

RPGs and baseball games. Can you think of two different types of games that go so well together? We sure can't, so look for EGM's previews of EA's Triple Play 99 and Sony's MLB 99 in addition to our comprehensive RPG Buyer's Guide. Additionally, this may shock you—there's more to gaming than

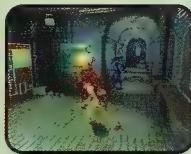
just baseball and RPGs, and by that, we mean Tekken. After a long wait, Tekken 3 is almost ready to hit the PlayStation. We'll take an in-depth look at the latest edition of Namco's franchise fighting game. N64 owners need not despair, however, as we'll preview Rampage and review Quake 64.

EGM²

March 1998



Final Fantasy Tactics fans, take heed: EGM² will offer a complete outline of the different character classes, skills, weapons and more!



The second part of the Resident Evil 2 strategy guide spills the beans on how to unlock the secret ending bonuses...



Check out the first-ever guide to Yoshi's Story, featuring exclusive level maps, tons of revealed secrets and tips.

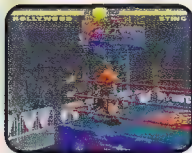
The undisputed heavyweight champ of game strategies and tricks returns with the real skinny on two early breakout PlayStation hits of '98: Gex: Enter the Gecko and Final Fantasy Tactics.

Don't forget the Nintendo 64! We kicked Bowser's behind in Yoshi's Story—and we'll have maps to

show you how to do the same.

Proving our edge as an in-depth strategy provider, we roll out the second halves of our Alundra and Resident Evil 2 coverage.

Also, look for a guide on the PC-to-PlayStation hit Riven; the guide solves the toughest puzzles the Myst sequel has to offer.



ASC Games' One and T*HQ's WCW Nitro are just two of the playable games on this month's exclusive OPM Demo CD!

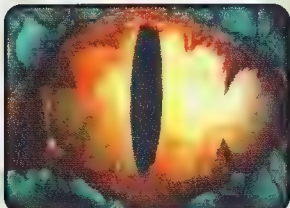
We give you the exclusive scoop on Final Fantasy VIII and Tekken 4, not to mention the complete specifications for the PlayStation 2!

April Fools! Actually, we'll be featuring an explosive Resident Evil 2 strategy guide as well as our usual collection of honest, straightforward, unbiased news, previews

and reviews. We'll be rating Midway's new arcade compilation, Arcade's Greatest Hits: The Atari Collection Vol. 2, as well as NCAA March Madness 98 and the long-awaited Gex: Enter the Gecko. Add a demo disc you'll find nowhere else, and you've got one of the greatest issues yet!

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

March 1998



Come trudge with us through the gory world of Resident Evil 2 in our excruciatingly detailed strategy guide.

NEW RELEASES & UPCOMING TITLES

Quest 64



Turok 2



N64 64



Import N64 Titles

- Art of Fighting Twin
- F Zero 64
- Hybrid Heaven
- Kirby's Air Ride
- Mother 3
- Puyo Puyo 64
- Rev Limit
- Robotech 64
- Sumo 64
- Super Mario 2
- Zelda 64

US N64 Titles

- 1080 Snowboarding
- Banjo-Kazooie's Great Adv.
- Forsaken
- GASPI
- Mission Impossible
- Mystical Ninja 64
- NBA in the Zone
- Olympic Hockey '98
- Quake 64
- Quest 64
- Twisted Edge Snowboarding
- Turok 2
- WWF War Zone
- Yoshi's Story
- Z-Axis Basketball

Metal Gear Solid



Resident Evil 2



US PlayStation Titles

- Cardinal SYN
- Crime Killer
- Diablo
- F.F. Tactics
- Forsaken
- Klonka
- March Madness '98
- Meganem '98
- Newman-Haas Racing
- Ninja
- Pitfall 3D: BTJ
- Saga Frontier
- Sentinel 2
- Vigilante 8
- Z-Axis Soccer

Panzer Dragon Saga



Burning Rangers



U.S. Saturn Titles

- Burning Rangers
- Dead or Alive
- Dungeons and Dragons
- Magic Knight RayEarth
- Ninja
- Quake
- Panzer Dragon Saga
- Power Boat Racing
- Sonic R
- Tactic Fighter
- Thunder Force 5
- Virtual Striker 2
- Zap 2
- Zero Divide: Final Conflict

Import PlayStation Titles

- Advanced V2
- Brave Prove
- Choro Q Jet Rainbow
- Crisis City
- Escapers
- Graduation M
- King of Fighters '97
- Lost Sword
- Parasite Eve
- R-types
- Samurai Shodown 4
- Tamagotchi
- TEKKEN 3 - call for details
- Ultraman Fighting Evolution
- *Xenogear
- (*Soundtrack also avail.)

Import Saturn Titles

- DOUKOKU
- Dragon Dream
- Eve The Last One
- Graduation Album
- Gundam - Gienstar
- Keriotasse
- Pia Carrot
- Pretty Sammy - Feelings of the hearts
- Prince Quest
- Princess Maker 2
- SD - Gundam G Century S
- Shining Force III
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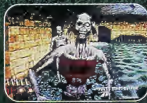
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